the weekly Standard

JANUARY 29, 2007 $3.95

THE STATE DEPT.'S ARAFAT COVER-UP
SCOTT W. JOHNSON

DUKE'S TENURED VIGILANTES

CHARLOTTE ALLEN
ON THE FACULTY'S SCANDALOUS RUSH TO JUDGMENT IN THE LACROSSE "RAPE" CASE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GM Gave Me A Mission To Mars

My name is Gerry Voeck. At GM, I worked on developing the technology that helped guide the Viking mission to Mars. Landing on the surface of Mars in 1975 forever changed how we view the universe. I think what GM is doing today will as well. GM's scientists have built the world's first drivable fuel cell by-wire vehicle — a high performance hydrogen propulsion system that emits only clean water vapor. Imagine that! GM is working toward cutting our dependence on petroleum, reducing emissions to nothing, and building a better performing, more powerful vehicle than ever before. Now that's an Earth shattering idea.

Gerry Voeck

Only GM

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cutting-Edge Commentary on Public Policy

POLICY REVIEW

SUBSCRIBE
Receive six bimonthly issues for only $36 a year.

FREE ISSUE
Receive a complimentary issue of the latest Policy Review without obligation.

Call 877.558.3727 or visit www.policyreview.org

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

In the new issue of *Policy Review*

Democracy in China

A long march through illusion

The reasons for democracy's slow boat to China are complicated: They range from American delusions to Chinese authoritarian resilience to Chinese nationalism. Far less complicated is the reality that, as the United States trumpets democracy worldwide as a strategic objective and a sign of human progress, China is unabashedly providing a counterexample. Successful democratization in China, therefore, will not only usher in freedom for 1.3 billion Chinese citizens but will also strike a blow against the stubbornness of authoritarianism worldwide. It is therefore vital for U.S. policymakers to examine China's success in resisting democratization, reassess the tools and assumptions of current democracy promotion efforts, and think of new ways to remove the roadblocks to freedom.

—Ying Ma

Israel's Lessons for U.S. Security Policy

Sixty years of coping with the worst sort of trouble

Since its founding in 1948, Israel has faced terrorism, insurgencies, and attacks from substate actors operating with non-Western goals and values, along with conventional wars and existential threats from aspiring nuclear nations such as Iraq and Iran. Israel's versatility and adaptability in successfully combating threats not only have defended the survival of the embattled nation but also made it an intriguing case study. As such, the Israel Defense Force's military actions have been — and are — a laboratory for methods, procedures, tactics, and techniques for the United States, which now faces the same Islamist adversaries across the planet.

—Thomas H. Henriksen

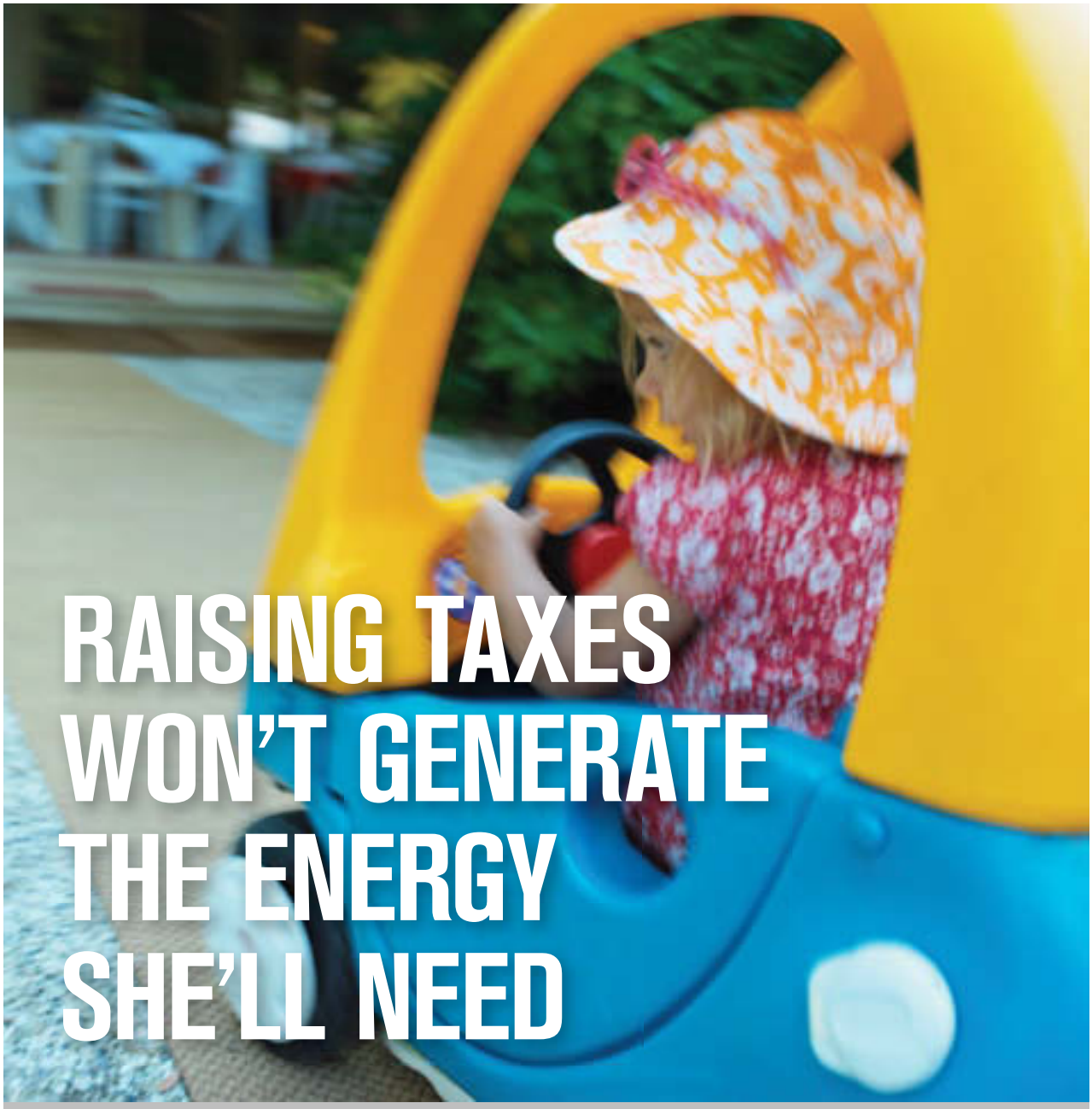
To read more, call 877.558.3727 for a free copy of the latest *Policy Review*.

HOOVER INSTITUTION

. . . ideas defining a free society

Hoover Institution Stanford University Stanford, CA 94305-6010 Tel: 877.466.8374 Fax: 650.723.1687 info@hoover.stanford.edu www.hoover.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



RAISING TAXES WON'T GENERATE THE ENERGY SHE'LL NEED

Most Americans agree energy security is a top national priority, because they want to ensure their families' quality of life now and into the future. So why do some in Congress want to raise taxes on the development of oil and natural gas resources?

History shows that changing the rules by raising energy taxes has serious consequences. After Congress levied a "windfall profits" tax in the 1980s, its own non-partisan Congressional Research Service determined this tax diverted $79 billion from domestic energy investment and reduced U.S. oil production by as much as 1.26 billion barrels.

Stable tax policies encourage energy development

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates America will need 25 percent more oil and natural gas by 2030. And to make sure future generations will have it, we need stable tax policies that encourage the development of critical energy resources. Benefiting Americans today – and especially tomorrow.

To learn more, visit www.api.org

America's Oil & Natural Gas Industry

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Contents

January 29, 2007 • Volume 12, Number 19

2 Scrapbook . . . . . *Ken Tomlinson, Scooter Libby, and more.*

4 Casual . . . . . *David Skinner, unhandy man.*

5 Correspondence . . . . . *On Saudi Arabia, etc.*

7 Editorial . . . *All We Are Saying Is Give Petraeus a Chance*

Articles

8 Is There Life After Politics? *Yes—more politics.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

9 Gas Lines, Garbage, and Closed Banks *Daily life in a Sunni neighborhood.* . . . . . BY JONATHAN KARL

11 At Last, Russia Conquers Europe *One gas pipeline at a time.* . . . . . BY IRWIN M. STELZER

13 Blackhawk Up *America returns to Somalia.* . . . . . BY DAVEED GARTENSTEIN-ROSS

15 A Worthwhile U.N. Initiative! *A welcome defense of the disabled from an unlikely organization.* . . . . BY WESLEY J. SMITH

Cover: Corbis / Mark E. Gibson

Features

17 Duke's Tenured Vigilantes
The scandalous rush to judgment in the lacrosse "rape" case. . . . . . BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

24 How Arafat Got Away with Murder
The State Department and the 1973 slaughter of two American diplomats. . . BY SCOTT W. JOHNSON

28 The Man for the Plan
Meet General David Petraeus, the new commander in Iraq. . . . . . BY TOM DONNELLY

Books & Arts

31 The Forgotten Virtue *How Plato perceived the importance of courage.* . . . . . BY HARVEY MANSFIELD

33 Broken Promise *How the vision of the civil rights era was lost.* . . . . . BY ROGER CLEGG

34 Minds Matter *A novelist explores the territory of the brain.* . . . . . BY JOHN WILSON

35 What Do They Know? *Reclaiming the K-12 canon from John Dewey.* . . . . . BY M.D. AESCHLIMAN

37 Kid Turns 70 *And nobody cares.* . . . . . BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

41 Boys Behaving Badly *The evil of banality in middle-class Los Angeles.* . . . . . BY JOHN PODHORETZ

44 Parody . . . . . *Letter to President Lincoln from congressmen protesting any surge of troops.*

William Kristol, *Editor* **Fred Barnes,** *Executive Editor*
Richard Starr, *Deputy Editor* **Claudia Anderson,** *Managing Editor*
Christopher Caldwell, Andrew Ferguson, David Tell *Senior Editors* **Philip Terzian,** *Books & Arts Editor*
Stephen F. Hayes, Matt Labash, *Senior Writers* **Victorino Matus, David Skinner,** *Assistant Managing Editors*
Matthew Continetti, *Associate Editor* **Jonathan V. Last,** *Online Editor* **Daniel McKivergan,** *Online Foreign Editor*
Sonny Bunch, *Assistant Editor* **Duncan Currie,** *Reporter* **Michael Goldfarb,** *Deputy Online Editor*
Whitney Blake, Joseph Lindsley, *Editorial Assistants*
Lev Nisnevitch, *Art Director* **Philip Chalk,** *Production Director*
Paul Weisner, *Finance Director* **Catherine Lowe,** *Marketing Director*
Taybor Cook, *Office Manager* **Carolyn Wimmer,** *Executive Assistant* **Abigail Lavin,** *Staff Assistant*
Gerard Baker, Max Boot, Joseph Bottum, Tucker Carlson, John J. DiIulio Jr., Noemie Emery, Joseph Epstein, David Frum, David Gelernter, Reuel Marc Gerecht, Brit Hume, Frederick W. Kagan, Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, Tod Lindberg, P. J. O'Rourke, John Podhoretz, Irwin M. Stelzer, *Contributing Editors*
Terry Eastland, *Publisher*

the weekly Standard

The Weekly Standard (ISSN 1083-3013), a division of News America Incorporated, is published weekly (except the first week in January, third week in April, second week in July, and fourth week in August) at 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20036. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. For subscription customer service in the United States, call 1-800-274-7293. For new subscription orders, please call 1-800-283-2014. Subscribers: Please send new subscription orders to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96153, Washington, DC 20090-6153; changes of address to The Weekly Standard, P.O. Box 96127, Washington, DC 20077-7767. Please include your latest magazine mailing label. Allow 3 to 5 weeks for arrival of first copy and address changes. Canadian/foreign orders require additional postage and must be paid in full prior to commencement of service. Canadian/foreign subscribers may call 1-902-563-4723 for subscription inquiries. Visa/MasterCard payment accepted. Cover price, $3.95. Back issues, $3.95 (includes postage and handling). Send letters to the editor to The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington, DC 20036-4617. For a copy of The Weekly Standard Privacy Policy, visit www.weeklystandard.com or write to Customer Service, The Weekly Standard, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505, Washington, D.C. 20036. Copyright 2007, News America Incorporated. All rights reserved. No material in The Weekly Standard may be reprinted without permission of the copyright owner. The Weekly Standard is a registered trademark of News America Incorporated.

BPA INTERNATIONAL

www.weeklystandard.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Loss for Public Broadcasting

Last week, with neither hype nor headlines, Ken Tomlinson asked the president not to resubmit his name for another term as chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (though he will serve until a successor is confirmed). His departure will mark the end of a long and valorous career in public broadcasting that began in 1982, when he took the helm at Voice of America. Besides the BBG, his service during the Bush administration included time as chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

From the beginning, he was the target of a relentless and dishonest smear campaign led by Democratic members of Congress, the public broadcasting establishment, and liberals inside both CPB and BBG. As Tomlinson sought to strengthen America's image throughout the world, investigators in Washington pored over his email and phone records in a desperate search for signs of malfeasance. Tomlinson's political enemies instigated the inquiries and cheered from the sidelines.

The irony: These members of the so-called "peace party" thwarted the efforts of a Bush appointee whose job was to carry out exactly the kind of public diplomacy in the Middle East that liberals tell us can be so effective in preventing wars.

Tomlinson earned the enmity of the left because he took his job seriously. If American taxpayers are going to fund public broadcasting—at home and abroad—the programming should reflect basic American values. He recognized the overwhelming liberal bias of NPR and PBS and had the audacity to do something about it. For this, he was attacked relentlessly as his critics played dumb: Bias? What bias?

As if to provide an answer, PBS omnipresence Bill Moyers announced last week his return to public broadcasting. He attacked the mainstream media as slaves on a plantation, captive of the "neoconservatives" and the "war party." He seems actually to believe this. Moyers announced a new documentary called "Buying the War," but made no mention of the vast wealth he has made over a lifetime sucking from the public television teat. Speaking to an audience of the fringe left, ever humble, he cast his return to television as a solemn duty [prepare to gag]:

> I'm coming back, because it's what I do best. Because I believe television can still signify, and I don't want you to feel so alone. I'll keep an eye on your work. You are to America what the abolition movement was, and the suffragette movement, and the civil rights movement. You touch the soul of democracy. It's not assured you will succeed in this fight. The armies of the Lord are up against mighty hosts. But as the spiritual sojourner Thomas Merton wrote to an activist grown weary and discouraged protesting the Vietnam war, "Do not depend on the hope of results. Concentrate on the value and the truth of the work itself."

While Moyers and his comrades congratulate each other, Tomlinson is undertaking a valuable new project. In his January 9 letter to the president, he said he had decided "it would be far more constructive to write a book on my experiences rather than to seek to continue government service." There is much to say and an urgent need for the country to hear it. The Scrapbook has one piece of advice for Tomlinson: Write quickly. ♦

Where Have We Heard This Before?

Count us underwhelmed by the logic of the ballyhooed Joe Biden/Carl Levin/Chuck Hagel resolution attacking Bush's Iraq policy. It all sounds eerily familiar: "accelerate training of Iraqi troops"; keep a small U.S. footprint; the problem isn't military, instead "Iraqis must reach a political settlement." Yes, it's almost as if Biden had plagiarized the mantra we've been hearing for the last two years from the departing commanders, Generals Casey and Abizaid. The only thing missing is a call for U.S. forces to stand down as the Iraqi forces stand up. If you can figure out why a senator would embrace a strategy that (a) he has been consistently condemning and (b) has already failed, then you, too, may be qualified to chair the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. ♦

Great Moments in Voir Dire

As reported January 18 by *National Review Online*'s Kathryn Jean Lopez: "A newsroom source relays this bit of news from the Scooter Libby trial: As jury selection continues, five of six questioned today have been excused. One of them was a young female *Washington Post* reporter (Arts section). She reportedly announced: 'I feel VP Cheney puts his business priorities over the good of the country,' and 'I don't trust him or anybody associated with him, and anyone associated with him would have to jump over a hurdle for me to think he was ever telling the truth.'"

Repeat after us: There is no such thing as media bias. There is no such thing as media bias. There is . . . ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schmitt and Donnelly and published by the American Enterprise Institute, entitled *Of Men and Materiel* (see *aei.org* for ordering information).

"Most Americans," they note, "believe that our military's capacity was expanded in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, that is not the case. The core strength of our military forces has continued to erode. . . . American forces are now stretched painfully thin by the grinding pace of operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere around the world. We have spent billions of dollars on the operational costs of these wars, but very little has been available to replenish the military's equipment or increase the size of the Army and the Marine Corps. The result has been a 'hollow buildup.'"

Of Men and Materiel—which includes contributions from a number of experts—is an altogether admirable effort to advance the case for a *real* buildup. We commend it highly to our readers and hold out hope that it will end up on the reading lists at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. ♦

More, Please

Attentive readers will have noticed over the past few years this magazine's persistent calls for a larger military. In an individual, this is called obsession. As journalists, we prefer to think of it as an editorial campaign. This campaign began in earnest even before 9/11. To pick one early example, from our special Bush inaugural issue of January 22, 2001 (cover line: "Charge!"), Gary J. Schmitt and Tom Donnelly urged the new administration to "Spend More on Defense—Now." They noted that "for the last several years, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have provided Congress with lists of their 'unfunded requirements.' Last year, they reported to Congress more than $15 billion in unmet needs for 2001 and nearly $18 billion for 2002; a new estimate totaling $30 billion is said to be in the works. There's not much to criticize on the chiefs' lists—mostly spare parts, improved combat training, and other very basic needs, as opposed to controversial, expensive new weapons."

Lamentably, the new administration chose to make its first and last stand for fiscal discipline in this one area that was crying out for increased resources, after the penury of the Clinton years.

Many of the points that we have advanced as part of our campaign over the succeeding six years have now been gathered together and argued in more systematic fashion in a handsome new volume, edited by the aforementioned

Help Wanted

There are two openings at The Weekly Standard. Job One: We're seeking a website developer who can both manage our site and help with new projects. Our ideal candidate will be a superb techie who can code in a variety of languages. Send résumé and salary requirements to Catherine Lowe at *hr@weeklystandard.com*.

Job Two: We're also looking for an accounting manager—a person with the right education and experience who can work with Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable and do bank reconciliations. Send résumé and salary requirements to Paul Weisner at *hr@weeklystandard.com*. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Casual

The Drain Brain

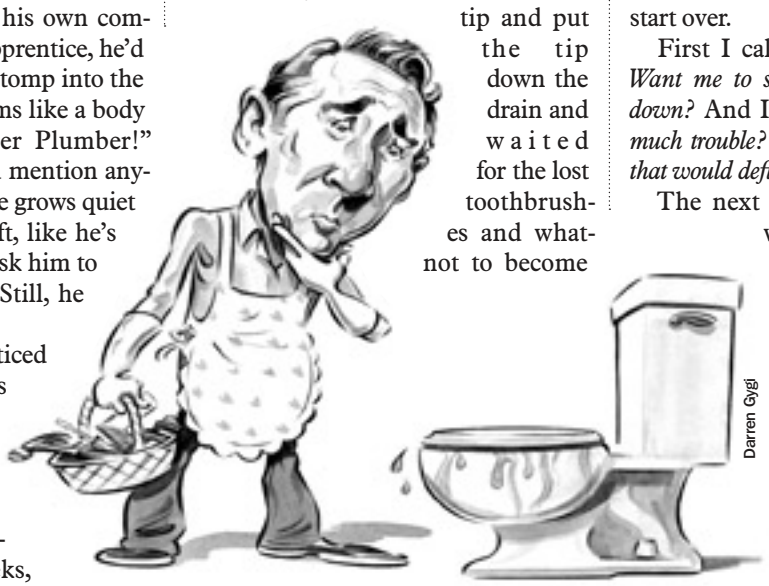
There ought to be a school, maybe a chain of schools, offering classes for practically-challenged adults. Courses would include basic car maintenance, financial planning, how to throw a dinner party, that kind of thing. The first class I'd take is elementary plumbing.

I do have, as it happens, a plumbing tutor. That would be my older brother, a licensed master plumber in New York City with his own company. When he was an apprentice, he'd come home from work, stomp into the kitchen, flex both his arms like a body builder, and yell "Super Plumber!" Fifteen years later, if you mention anything relating to pipes, he grows quiet and his eyes start to drift, like he's worried you're going to ask him to check the water heater. Still, he takes my calls. Usually.

A few weeks ago, I noticed the grout around the tiles under our downstairs toilet was wet. This was bad news. It meant I also had to fix the running-water problem: For a couple weeks, while I tried to ignore it, the tank had been constantly refilling. Advice was only a phone call away, but I was scared. I felt like a dyslexic forced to take a spelling test.

Adding to my anxiety was the fact that my wife, Cynthia, expects me to be able to manage basic household repairs without too much fuss. Something about losing her husband for a whole weekend while he replaces a flapper—a task the Super Plumber would complete in ten minutes—taxes her forbearance. In my imagined school of household repair, she is the dean of students, and she's always giving me this look, known by academic underachievers the world round—the Are-you-ever-going-to-graduate? look.

I've sometimes tried to fix plumbing without expert guidance. When the stopper in the upstairs bathroom sink jammed, I removed it. When stuff began falling into the open drain, I stuck a wire down to pull the stuff out. When the drain got totally clogged, I took a long wooden spoon and taped a wad of toilet paper to the end to make, essentially, a large Q-tip. Then I put some Krazy Glue on the toilet-paper tip and put the tip down the drain and waited for the lost toothbrushes and whatnot to become affixed to the glue—and then pulled them out.


Darren Gygi

I told my brother about it. The Super Plumber asked me, next time I tell this story, not to mention that my brother is a plumber.

The conversation went like this, if you want to know how guys from Queens talk.

He was like *Whatchoo don't have tools? You can't open the trap underneath?* And I'm like *No, I got tools, four or five of them. But I don't have whatchoo call the big wrench you open pipes with?* And he's like *A pipe wrench.*

For the record, I now own so many tools I don't know where to put them. They're stowed in a wicker basket that originally came to us, filled with gourmet treats, as a housewarming gift. When my brother, during a visit, spotted the tool-stuffed basket, he was like *David, you never heard of a toolbox?*

This time when I call, he gives me some instructions on replacing the connector that supplies water to the tank. We also talk about the running-water problem. Seems I need to replace the flapper again.

After shopping around for the connector and a flapper, I get to work. The water needs to be shut off and the tank needs to be emptied. After I replace everything, water is leaking out through the bolts. So I have to start over.

First I call my brother. He's like *Want me to send a couple of my guys down?* And I'm like *Would that be too much trouble?* And he's like *Yes, David, that would definitely be too much trouble.*

The next day I get back to work while Cynthia is outside on the sidewalk playing with some kids. A second look reveals they are my own kids, whom I haven't seen all weekend.

Several hours and one trip to the hardware store later, I'm done. The bathroom works again, though frankly not so well. Still, I declare victory.

My wife wants to know why it always takes the whole weekend for me to fix anything. I try to explain to her that my memory simply doesn't retain the details of these little fix-it jobs, so it's as if I'm always starting from scratch.

I tell her, "If I don't think a particular piece of information is necessary to my becoming a better writer or a better person, it's like my brain lets go of it to make room for information that does serve one of these purposes."

I don't remember what she said in reply.

David Skinner

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Teenage Wasteland

In his review of the Nicholas Delbanco novel that treats the lives of boomers with moral seriousness, Barton Swaim doubts that the "greatest generation" was great since they produced the Boomers ("Debunking Delbanco," Dec. 25). Certainly those who fought on two fronts in World War II must be deemed comparatively great. Nevertheless, they went on to produce a generation of youngsters less mature than any before. A word had to be invented for them: It was in the 1950s that the adjective "teen-age" (Webster II) became a noun (Webster III). How men and women who braved war for so long could then quail before their own children, saying "Work it out on your own" as James Dean's dad does in *Rebel Without a Cause*—thus orphaning their own children—is truly perplexing. When, in the *Republic*, Socrates suggests kids under 10 should be taken from their parents, he was just kidding. In the 1950s, the parents weren't kidding.

Michael Platt
Fredericksburg, Tex.

Arabian Might

Regarding Stephen Schwartz's "Big Saudis on Campus" (Jan 1): As Saudi Arabia has been under continuous terrorist attack since 1996, we have been leading a campaign to squash it locally and globally, and our deeds speak for themselves. Our schools have been teaching the Islamic values of peace, compassion, and tolerance for all humanity. The Saudi king has allocated the biggest share of the Saudi national budget for a modern and tolerant education structure, and the king, with his open mind, has launched a mega-project to sponsor Saudi students at schools all around the world.

Additionally, Wahhabism is just like any Christian movement that calls for a "back to the basics" movement for a direct relationship between God and individuals. This movement has helped to unite the different tribes of the Arabian peninsula after centuries of bloody conflict to become the leader of both the Islamic and Arab worlds.

Khalid AlSaeed
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Stephen Schwartz responds: I quite agree that Saudi deeds speak for themselves: That 15 out of 19 of the terrorists on 9/11 were Saudi speaks more eloquently than just about anything.

Misremembering Lipset

Michael Barone's obituary of Seymour Martin Lipset ("Exceptional American," Jan. 15) misidentifies the subject of Lipset's *Agrarian Socialism* as the Social Credit movement in Saskatchewan. In fact, the book's subject was the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, an ideological adversary of Social Credit. Since Professor Lipset is justly famous as an expositor of the isolationist American psyche, this gaffe in his obituary is only appropriate.

David Kary
Elkins Park, Penn.

Correction

In Robert Zarate's article on the late Roberta Wohlstetter, we referred in passing to a RAND colleague of Wohlstetter's, Paul Baran, as a "Hungarian-born" engineer ("First Lady of Intelligence," Jan. 22). Baran, one of the inventors of the packet-switched network, was in fact born in what is now Belarus. He emails to clarify that "it was Poland" at the time of his birth. "My brother, my sister, and I were all born in the same house, but in three different countries: Germany, Russia, and Poland. Now it is Belarus." He adds: "I am flattered to be thought to have come from Hungary. I was 2 years old at the time I decided to come to America. Best damn decision I ever made."

• • •

The Weekly Standard
welcomes letters to the editor.
All letters should be addressed:
Correspondence Editor
The Weekly Standard
1150 17th St., NW, Suite 505
Washington, DC 20036.

You may also fax letters: (202) 293-4901
or email: editor@weeklystandard.com.

Advertising Sales

Peter Dunn, *Associate Publisher pdunn@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3334*

Nicholas H.B. Swezey, *Advertising Director nswezey@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3355*
Robert Dodd, *Canada Advertising Manager bob@doddmedia.com; 905-885-0664*
Noel Buckley, *Canada Advertising Manager noel@doddmedia.com; 905-684-5085*
Patrick F. Doyle, *West Coast Advertising Manager patrick.doyle@mcginleydoyle.com; 415-777-4383*
Don Eugenio, *Midwest Advertising Manager deugenio@weeklystandard.com; 312-953-7236*
Alexander Bruring, *Foreign Country Reports A.bruring@worldreportmedia.com; 011-31-20-470-9238*
Amanda Belden, *Account Executive and online sales abelden@weeklystandard.com; 202-496-3350*

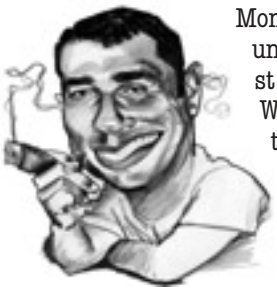
For more information, visit ***weeklystandard.com****, click on the* ***About Us*** *button at the top, and select* ***Advertise****.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SO JUST HOW ENTERTAINING IS A WEEKLY STANDARD CRUISE?

From last year's cruise diary by online editor Jonathan V. Last:

OUR THIRD IS JUNE 16–23, 2007



Monday, Day 3: "The Weekly Standard's second annual cruise is now underway. We left Saturday from San Diego just after 5:00 p.m. . . . and started Sunday with a lecture by Fred Barnes, who talked about George W. Bush, the nature of his relationship with official Washington, and the character of his presidency. . . . Afterwards there were panel discussions on the state of the Republican Party, the prospects for the new Supreme Court, and the future of the blogosphere and the New Media . . . . The Oosterdam is a pretty swank ship and the food so far has been top notch. . . .

WE'LL LEAVE SEATTLE AND GO NORTH TO ALASKA

WE'RE SAILING ON THE OOSTERDAM AGAIN THIS YEAR!

Tuesday, Day 4: "The Oosterdam made port [in Cabo San Lucas] just before 6:00 a.m. on Monday and from our little cove, you could hear seals barking while squadrons of pelicans circled overhead . . . . After long excursions onshore, dinner on the Oosterdam was, again, fantastic.

Wednesday, Day 5: "Tomorrow we put into Puerto Vallarta and The Weekly Standard programs pick back up with Phil Terzian leading a discussion on Steven Hayward's book on Churchill and Reagan, Greatness.

CHECK IT OUT AT HOLLANDAMERICA.COM!

Thursday, Day 6: "Not content with a program of mere panel discussions, lectures and fruity girl drinks, a group of Standard cruisers met up at 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday to strike out into our final port of call for various adventures. Some people went on hikes, others went swimming with dolphins, others flashed along zip lines on the forest canopy. . . .

BILL ONLY GIVES "GREAT" PRESENTATIONS

Friday, Day 7: "Thursday began with a great presentation by Bill Kristol on the state of world affairs, touching on domestic politics, the danger posed by Iran, and the fluidity of the post-9/11 world . . . . It's been a great week. From Cabo San Lucas to Mazatlan to Puerto Vallarta, all of our destinations made for fun visits. We had long hospitable dinner parties every night and lots of good conversations. . . . [and] some of the best interactions are the informal ones: bumping into new friends at the gym, or in the lounge, or even on the basketball court.

THEY'RE FINAL! EMAIL US NOW OR CALL 1–800–266–4043. RESERVE YOUR CABIN NOW!

"We're finalizing the plans for next year's cruise now and if you send us an email to twscruise@weeklystandard.com with your name and address, we'll let you know all the details so you can have first crack at getting a space onboard . . . ."

2007 CRUISE SCHEDULE

Date	Day	Ports of Call
June 16	Sat.	Seattle, WA
June 17	Sun.	At Sea
June 18	Mon.	Juneau, AK
June 19	Tues.	Hubbard Glacier
June 20	Wed.	Sitka, AK
June 21	Thurs.	Ketchikan, AK
June 22	Fri.	Victoria, BC
June 23	Sat.	Seattle, WA

Bill Kristol, Fred Barnes, Claudia Anderson, Phil Terzian, Jonathan Last, and Terry Eastland invite you to join them on an Alaskan adventure.

Don't miss the boat!

*For more, call **1-800-266-4043** or visit **www.twscruise.com***

THE CRUISE AUTHORITY

Holland America Line

the weekly Standard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the weekly Standard

All We Are Saying . . . Is Give Petraeus a Chance

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton has returned from her visit to Iraq with a bold (if not entirely new) recommendation: Congress should vote to cap the number of U.S. forces the president can deploy to Iraq. (She notes that her demand has precedent in the experience of Lebanon in the early 1980s: Was she pleased with the results of that congressional intervention?) She thereby joins Senators Christopher Dodd and Barack Obama, among others, in the demand that Congress assume responsibility for operational military decisions—and, in fact, for the conduct of the war.

Clinton proposes, for no very clear reason, to cap the number of American forces in Iraq at their level as of January 1, 2007. America, of course, was not winning in Iraq on the first of this year, so such a resolution is, in fact, a resolution to accept defeat.

Oh, no, Democrats will say. They're simply for a political solution, not a military solution. But Democratic claims that Iraqis must immediately find a political solution to their political problems are laughable in the face of the violence in Baghdad. Abandoning American efforts to control the violence in Iraq would lead to an increase in violence. This would in turn reduce the odds of peaceful and constructive political discourse, and would further undermine any spirit of compromise between the competing Iraqi factions. Perhaps the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and the forced migration of millions would eventually lead to a certain exhaustion. Is that the outcome Senators Clinton, Dodd, and Obama have in mind? It's a far cry from the Democratic party that insisted on sending American forces to stop ethnic cleansing in war-torn Bosnia in the 1990s, to the one that now declares an Iraqi bloodbath no concern of ours.

Beyond that, Clinton's statement completely ignores the significance of a congressionally mandated cap on troop strength. American forces are fighting in Iraq every day. They do not have enough strength to control the violence they are facing. The efforts of Clinton and others would prevent the new commander in Iraq, David Petraeus, from working effectively to bring the violence under control. There is every reason, therefore, to imagine that violence would continue to increase. This would be the effect of Sen. Clinton's legislation.

An increase in violence, furthermore, would place American forces in Iraq at greater danger as they move around the country (which they would have to do even if their role were restricted to training Iraqi troops, as some have demanded). It is easy to imagine circumstances in which it would be necessary to send more troops to protect Americans at risk in Iraq—which this resolution would forbid. Even if Senator Clinton demanded an immediate withdrawal of U.S. forces (and she claims she does not want that), there are many circumstances in which additional forces would be required to make it safe for American troops to leave. Why would Senator Clinton, or any other responsible person, wish to deny the commander in Iraq the ability to request forces necessary to ensure the safety of American soldiers?

Why, above all, would she or anyone else imagine that it is appropriate for a committee of 535 people to micromanage a war by setting a precise (and arbitrary) figure for the number of soldiers the commander on the spot can deploy?

There is one man who should be recommending the size of American forces in Iraq, and that is the incoming commander, General Petraeus. Neither the Bush administration nor any collection of congressmen should preempt his professional evaluation of the situation and of the forces necessary to accomplish his mission. It is foolish and absurd for politicians to propose resolutions on American troop strength in Iraq before even hearing General Petraeus's voice in the debate. And when he has spoken, Senator Clinton and her colleagues should carefully weigh the burden they will take on themselves if they dismiss his advice.

Republicans should not hesitate to point out how irresponsible their Democratic colleagues (and some Republicans) are being. Senator Clinton's troop cap is dangerously foolish. The nonbinding resolution of disapproval Senator Biden has proposed is irresponsible. The fact is that President Bush has, as he was widely and correctly urged to do, changed strategy. He's put a new commander, General Petraeus, in charge. Petraeus thinks the new plan can work, with the support of additional troops. He'll be confirmed by the Senate and sent out to the theater this week. Members of Congress should ask themselves, "What can we do to help Petraeus succeed?" Or would Senator Clinton and the Democrats just as soon lose?

—Frederick W. Kagan and William Kristol

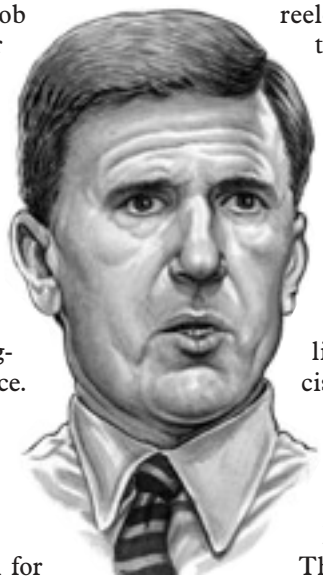
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is There Life After Politics?

Yes—more politics.

BY FRED BARNES

Defeated politicians usually slip quietly into obscurity. But Republicans Rick Santorum, the former Pennsylvania senator, and Bob Ehrlich, the ex-governor of Maryland, won't be among them. Nor have they become lobbyists or signed up for a work-free perch at some Washington institution. And they aren't going into political hibernation in expectation of emerging later to run for office. They have decided to stay in politics and fight, almost as if they'd won last November.



Ehrlich

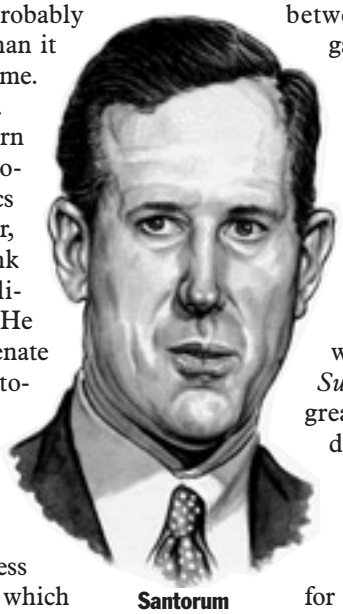
This is a new model for politicians. Some join law firms or become lobbyists and are rarely heard from again. These two are setting up shop now—Santorum in Washington, Ehrlich in Annapolis—to pursue the political causes that marked their time in office. They aim to be seen (on TV), heard (radio and speeches), and read (when they finish books).

Santorum, 48, has adopted a relatively new cause: the global threat of Islamic extremism. He is more closely identified with conservative social issues, especially the crusade to curb or ban abortion. In fact, his defeat deprives the Senate of its most skillful and knowledgeable foe of abortion. It was Santorum who guided the bill banning partial-birth abortion through the Senate in 2003, a measure now before the Supreme Court.

In the waning weeks of his reelection campaign, Santorum emphasized a different issue. He delivered several speeches warning about what he called, in a deliberate echo of Churchill, "the gathering storm." War, he said, "is at our doorstep, and it is fueled, figuratively and literally, by Islamic fascism, nurtured and bred in Iran." The speeches attracted attention and drew praise from conservatives, but had little impact on the race.

The issue "probably hurt me more than it helped," Santorum told me. He lost 59 to 41 percent.

Now, rather than return to Pennsylvania, Santorum has joined the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a Washington think tank that specializes in religious and moral issues. He brought several of his Senate staffers with him. Santorum may also affiliate with a law firm (he has six children to provide for), but his chief focus is his EPPC effort to create awareness of "America's enemies," which include not only Islamists but also dictators like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela and Kim Jong Il of North Korea.



Santorum

The threat, he says, "is not obvious to the American people right now."

Ehrlich, 49, who left office last week, may also connect with a law firm. But his political activity is likely to overshadow any legal work. Instead of returning to the Baltimore suburbs, he has bought a house in Annapolis, the Maryland capital, and intends to keep some of his top aides with him. His plans include: giving speeches to nonpartisan and Republican groups, writing a book of political advice, doing radio and TV commentary, helping a Republican presidential candidate (probably Rudy Giuliani, the ex-New York mayor), and trying to strengthen the pathetically weak Republican party of Maryland.

After winning elections in a strongly Democratic state—for the legislature, Congress, and governor's office—Ehrlich wants to popularize his strategy for winning as a Republican in states normally unreceptive to Republican candidates. It consists, in part, of being moderate on social issues and libertarian on economic matters. He calls this "right of center but reasonable."

Ehrlich was a successful and popular governor. He won authorization of a controversial freeway through Washington's northern suburbs, between I-95 and I-270; gained approval for charter schools; turned a state deficit into a surplus; and made Maryland a two-party state—for four years anyway. "We established a marketplace of competing ideas and open debate," he wrote in the *Baltimore Sun* on January 14. "My greatest wish is that this debate continues despite the return to single-party rule."

To his surprise, Ehrlich was endorsed for reelection by the *Washington Post*. It was little help. He lost despite an approval rating in the 50s. Ehrlich concluded that there

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

Illustrations by Drew Friedman

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was no way in a Democratic year for him to win in a solidly Democratic state. He figures he'd even have lost to Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, whom he defeated in 2002.

In recent years, Ehrlich and his lieutenant governor, Michael Steele, were the only Republicans to win statewide office in Maryland. The party lacks popular leaders and its state legislators are a tiny minority. For that reason alone, Ehrlich says, "we have a duty to the party" to stay and fight. "Our base is small."

Both Ehrlich and Santorum blame President Bush for Republican losses last year. What happened? "George Bush happened," Ehrlich says. "We just thought we could survive." He came close, losing 53 to 46 percent. Santorum never had a chance. He was never ahead in polls and rarely even close to Democrat Bob Casey Jr. He says Bush gave effective speeches on national security early last fall that buttressed his campaign, but "then he stopped. He stopped engaging the issue and went into political mode. At that point, [my campaign] was a lost cause."

Santorum's future is likely to be as a nonelected spokesman for conservative causes. He has no plans to return to Pennsylvania and run for public office again.

Ehrlich's future should be different. He is tough and ambitious and less ideological than Santorum. As a Republican governor facing lopsided Democratic majorities in the legislature, he and his aides "awakened every morning knowing it was going to be full contact every day, all day," he says. He relished the fight and recalls his victories fondly, notably the refusal to allow a general tax increase. "That drove Democrats crazy," he says. He's likely to run again or, if Giuliani is elected president, serve in his administration.

For now, Ehrlich and Santorum are pursuing a new path and it's not the most lucrative or least rigorous one. They refuse to take a hiatus from politics. As a result, we will be hearing from them, probably loudly and no doubt clearly. ♦

Gas Lines, Garbage, and Closed Banks

Daily life in a Sunni neighborhood.

BY JONATHAN KARL

Baghdad

To get an idea of the problems facing American commanders in Iraq, consider the case of the Rafidain Bank in Baghdad's Amiriyah neighborhood. The bank, which has been closed since shortly after Saddam's fall, isn't much more than a storefront on a street lined with small retail businesses, but residents desperately want it reopened. General George Casey visited Amiriyah in mid-December, heard those demands, and ordered his top subordinates to make reopening the bank a priority.

Colonel J.B. Burton, who has responsibility for Amiriyah, snapped into action. Money was spent to install surveillance cameras and teller windows. Concrete barriers were put out front as protection from car bombs. The Sunni management of the bank hired local guards. All the work was done quietly through Iraqi intermediaries so it would not look like an American project and become a target for insurgents. By late December, the bank was open again.

And here is where the story takes an all-too-familiar turn. After three weeks of brisk activity, the bank was no longer doing business, a victim not of insurgent bombs, but of the Iraqi government. The finance ministry, which is controlled by the Shia SCIRI party, ordered the bank closed. It's not secure, ministry officials explained, and therefore must be shut down. Military officials with responsibility for Amiriyah say the claim is bogus. "That bank is secure because these people have a vested interest in keeping it secure," says Major Brynt Parmeter. "We could open it tomorrow." The military suspects the bank was shuttered for another reason: It was injecting economic vibrancy into a Sunni neighborhood that had been slowly dying.

This kind of story is told and retold every day in Baghdad. The Shia-dominated federal and local governments are systematically denying resources to Baghdad's Sunni neighborhoods. You see it in lines that go on for blocks at fuel stations. The Sunni areas don't get much gas or kerosene. You see it in the trash strewn everywhere in once upscale Sunni neighborhoods. Sanitation trucks don't come anymore. "They have the trucks," says Major Parmeter. "They have the people to drive them, but the trash isn't picked up." Fuel lines are much shorter in the Shia neighborhoods, but access to those stations is frequently blocked by Shia militia thugs who stand in front of the stations and, mafia-like, decide who gets fuel and who doesn't.

Several U.S. military officers I spoke to in Baghdad are convinced that the squeezing of Baghdad's Sunni neighborhoods is a deliberate operation carried out primarily by Baghdad's unelected Shia provincial government. The local government, they say, is trying to "soften" the Sunni neighborhoods, so Shia militias can move in and force out Sunni residents. Whether it is government malfeasance or incompetence, the result is the same.

The first thing that hits you in these neighborhoods is the stench of garbage. Picking up trash was part of the mission when the military launched Operation Together For-

Jonathan Karl is senior national security correspondent for ABC News.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ward back in August. The plan was to kill the bad guys, clean up the streets, and give Iraqis a chance to take their neighborhoods back. In the Sunni Doura neighborhood, the military scored its first success. The insurgents were either killed or chased away, the trash bulldozed, and sure enough, the markets reopened and a sense of normalcy returned. That was August. In September, as soon as U.S. troops left, the trash began to pile up again. Dead bodies piled up too—many of them with holes drilled in their heads. Over the past three months, this has been perhaps Baghdad's deadliest neighborhood.

In late December, U.S. troops moved back into Doura and once again chased the extremists away. I visited Doura's market district. With U.S. troops back in force, it is beginning to show signs of life again. The trash is everywhere and most of the stores shuttered, but a few families are walking the streets and a few stores are reopening. There's a long, long way to go. Since about Christmas, there has been a 24/7 U.S. military presence here. The military plans to wall off the area, limiting access through a few security checkpoints that, theoretically, will be manned by Iraqi forces.

Driving through a section of Amiriyah that borders a Shia neighborhood, I noticed block after block of abandoned homes. Many of these houses had big Xs spraypainted on them. The soldiers tell me the Xs are painted by the Mahdi Army to send a message: Leave your home or be killed. Elsewhere, Sunni extremists are waging their own campaign of sectarian terror, sending thousands of Shiites fleeing their homes to refugee camps on the outskirts of Baghdad. But the Mahdi Army, enabled by the Iraqi government, is more organized, methodical even, as it works to sweep the Sunnis out of Baghdad's mixed neighborhoods.

It's the Mahdi Army's answer to the American strategy of "clear, hold, and build." Once homes are cleared of Sunnis, the Mahdi Army turns to its real-estate wing, which moves Shiites from those refugee camps into the homes recently abandoned by Sunnis who have either been terrorized or murdered.

AP/ Karim Kadim

A 2005 ambush of a fuel-supply convoy in Baghdad's Amiriyah neighborhood

I walked through the ruins of the Hurriya neighborhood with a squad of soldiers from the Army's 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. The soldiers were responding to reports that abandoned homes were being used by insurgents to store weapons. As soldiers kicked open one door, I followed them inside. There were carpets on the floor, ornate furniture, portraits of religious leaders on the wall, bookcases filled with books. It was a warm, comfortable, middle class home. The residents had simply vanished. Next door the soldiers found one of the few families in the area who have not left. A middle-aged man stood at the door with a little boy of about four clinging to his leg, and his wife and daughter meekly behind them.

"This is a good neighborhood," the man told the soldiers through an interpreter. "There has been so much fighting, people have just left."

Hurriya was a mixed neighborhood. Now almost all of the Sunnis are gone. But many Shiites have been forced out as well. The ruins of a mosque could be seen from the man's back porch. It's a Shiite mosque, the man said. It's been abandoned for three months.

This man wants to protect his family, but refuses to leave his home. He watches as his neighborhood turns into a trash-strewn ghost town. He asks the American soldiers in for a cup of chai, knowing they offer the best chance of saving what's left of his neighborhood, and his way of life. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At Last, Russia Conquers Europe

One gas pipeline at a time.

BY IRWIN M. STELZER

Adam Smith never met Vladimir Putin or Hugo Chávez, but, as with so many other things, he anticipated their appearance on the scene. No one can accuse the Great Scot of protectionist proclivities, but he did warn that there are times when free trade takes second place to national defense. He proposed laying "some burden" on foreign commerce "when some particular sort of industry is necessary for the defense of the country . . . [since] defense is of much more importance than opulence."

America, Britain, and other free-trading countries have long welcomed foreign investment on the generally correct theory that such investment enriches the nation by bringing capital, jobs, and foreign know-how to the country. There have been exceptions, some sensible, some just plain silly. During World War II, America prevented German interests from acquiring radio stations, something modern-day enthusiasts for giving Al Jazeera access to U.S. and U.K. cable networks, while its owners broadcast pictures of the beheading of American and British citizens, might keep in mind. On the less sensible side, American law still prevents foreigners from controlling U.S. airlines, a measure needlessly broad to prevent a hostile power from gaining such control: We can, after all, distinguish between British Airways and Aeroflot.

In America, the approval by the government of the acquisition of port facilities by an Arab company prompted a review of procedures so secretive and arcane that the president found out about the deal only when it leaked to the newspapers. Naturally, the deal-making community fought to prevent any tightening of review procedures, since they agree with Adam Smith only when he argues for limiting government powers, and not when he quite wisely suggests that—to put it in modern-day terms—homeland security is of much more importance than bonuses for investment bankers and a bit larger GDP.

Now the Western democracies have to decide what to do about acquisition-minded Russian companies, flush with cash and ordered by Vladimir Putin to extend their global reach. The U.S. government has agreed to allow the Russian steel company Evraz to acquire Oregon Steel Mills for $2.35 billion. The Committee on Foreign Investment (CFIUS) finds nothing troubling in the deal, which does seem odd, for two reasons. First, Oregon Steel is an important supplier of armor plate to the U.S. military, which, in addition, is increasingly dependent on steel from China. Second, Evraz's main investor is Roman Abramovich, the Russian billionaire currently living in London.

Alone among the so-called oligarchs, Abramovich retains the favor of Putin, for reasons about as clear as Kremlin personnel shuffles in the good old days of the Soviet Union. And not because the high-living émigré has used a tiny portion of his wealth to turn the Chelsea football team into a worldwide sports power, a development of little interest to Putin. Abramovich is also the man the Russian president appointed governor of Chukotka, in remotest Siberia (the region that is home to the prison in which another oligarch, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, former head of Yukos, is housed), so that Abramovich could prove his undying (literally, these days) loyalty by bankrolling its economic development. Which he has done. Abramovich now wishes that this cup would pass, but Putin has ordered him to stay on. This, despite Abramovich's perhaps infelicitous statement, "I believe my mission is accomplished. Life in Chukotka is now no worse than in any other part of Russia."

One might say that while relations between Putin and other expatriate Russians have been poisoned, those between the Evraz owner and Putin have not. Which suggests that when Russia decides that it is in its interest to have Oregon Steel fall behind in deliveries of armor plate to the U.S. military, Oregon's management might decide that profit maximization is not the only *raison d'être* for the enterprise.

But this is trivial compared with the dilemma faced by Britain and the E.U. Putin has made it clear that he regards his nation's oil and gas reserves as a political weapon. No longer need the West fear Russian tanks rolling across the plains of Europe. Instead, it has to fear that Russian fuels will stop flowing through the pipelines to the homes and factories of Europe.

Russia has demonstrated in its disputes with Ukraine and Georgia that it will cut off supplies of gas if its terms are not met and, in its brawl with Belarus, that it is quite willing to stop the flow of oil through the pipeline transiting that country even if that creates supply problems in Germany, Poland, and other parts of Europe. In Russia's blockade of Belarus earlier this month, a significant 12.5 percent of Europe's crude supply was cut off for three days. Refineries in Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic had to dip into reserves to keep operating during the brief pipeline shutdown.

Irwin M. Stelzer is a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *director of economic policy studies at the Hudson Institute, and a columnist for the* Sunday Times *(London).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Only after Belarus's president, Aleksandr Lukashenko, agreed to eliminate all transit charges and, more important, cede control of his country's pipeline, would Putin allow Semyon Vainshtok, president of Russia's monopoly pipeline Transneft, even to open negotiations over future prices and fees. German chancellor Angela Merkel called the supply cutoff "unacceptable," which seems not to be worrying the Russians one bit.

There is worse. Putin is determined to bring all oil and gas production under the control of the state. So his environment minister suddenly found that Shell and its partners were in violation of his agency's regulations, and ordered their operations in the giant Sakhalin field in the Russian far east closed down unless they sold their interests to state-owned Gazprom. BP is similarly being squeezed out because of "illegal logging" on its drilling site in Siberia. The *Economist* reminds us of an old KGB adage, "Give me the man, and I will find you the crime."

Shell had no choice but to capitulate. Two humiliations followed. Shell had to defend the price it was paid for this forced sale lest shareholders wonder what the company's managers had in mind when they risked billions in a lawless country. And, as with the old show trials, in which the accused were forced to praise their accusers, Shell's chief executive Jeroen van der Veer abased himself before his expropriator. "Thank you very much for your support," he told Putin in the presence of the press. Stalin would have been pleased.

Of course, none of this would have happened had European leaders heeded the warnings of Ronald Reagan. Acting on information from the CIA, Reagan decided early in his presidency that reliance by Europe on Russian energy supplies would inhibit it from siding with America in any showdowns. Reagan even placed sanctions on manufacturers of gas-compression turbines, used in pipelines, to prevent them from supplying the builders of the link between Serbia's huge Urengoy gas field and Central Europe, via Ukraine.

Not for the first or last time, Europe's elite ignored American warnings. Now, those who believe in the efficiency-enhancing effects of the free flow of capital, the free traders among European countries, see their theoretical belief foundering on the rock of the hard reality of their energy dependence. Russia has billions available to invest in overseas companies. It refuses to allow foreign investment in its own energy infrastructure, which it has renationalized, but insists on its right to buy up the energy infrastructure of other countries. Result: Russian pipelines want to extend the reach of their monopolies beyond Russia's borders, deep into the heart of Europe.

Vladimir Putin

Thomas Fluharty

Private-sector bidders that might go up against Gazprom in takeover battles can't possibly win, since the Russian company is buying strategic leverage in addition to purely commercial advantage. Gazprom is believed to be planning to make a bid for Centrica, a large U.K. gas distributor as well as a supplier of gas and electricity to 1.5 million customers in eight American states through its subsidiary, Direct Energy. It then will move on to attempt takeovers of key energy infrastructure projects in America.

Putin, a gaggle of lobbyists, and the investment bankers representing Gazprom and other Russian state entities will undoubtedly argue that if the American government is content to have Venezuela-owned Citgo gas stations dotting America's highways, with virtual monopolies on some Florida roads, it should be even happier to see Russia enter the U.S. market. After all, President Bush pronounced himself satisfied after peering into Putin's soul, and, unlike Hugo Chávez, the Russian president has never used the U.N. to call Bush a "devil [who] smells of sulfur."

So America, Britain, Germany, and other countries with long histories of supporting free trade, and economists who believe that a "market in companies" is a good thing, now have to make the choice with which Adam Smith confronted policymakers over 230 years ago—defense or opulence; preventing hostile nations from gaining control over key resources, or adding a bit to national wealth by attracting inbound investment from hostile national governments. They will also have to decide whether Russia's state-run companies should continue to be given access to American and British capital markets so that they can float issues of securities, and raise funds for still more expansion.

Older readers will recall the insight recorded by Lenin: "[The capitalists] will furnish credits . . . and materials and technical equipment which we lack, [and] will restore our military industry necessary for our future attacks against our suppliers. To put it in other words, they will work on the preparation of their own suicide." ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Blackhawk Up

America returns to Somalia.

BY DAVEED GARTENSTEIN-ROSS

If there is one lesson to be drawn from American military engagements since 9/11, it is that the hard part is winning the peace. Nowhere is this truer today than in Somalia. With the army-vs.-army phase of the conflict in that country seemingly complete, Somalia's transitional federal government faces its real challenge.

The position of the transitional government seemed dire a month ago. The Islamic Courts Union, a radical group affiliated with al Qaeda, was on the brink of destroying the U.N.-recognized government, which was confined to the south-central city of Baidoa. But when the Islamic Courts Union launched an assault on Baidoa, the Ethiopian military (which was protecting the transitional government) responded with greater force than expected. The Islamic Courts had no good response to Ethiopian airpower. And high-level sources in both the transitional government and U.S. military intelligence report that U.S. air and ground forces were active from the outset, including CIA paramilitary officers, Special Operations forces, Marine units, and helicopter gunships.

The Ethiopians and the transitional government wrested Mogadishu from the Islamic Courts on December 28, and have reversed most of the latter's geographic gains. The apparent end of major combat came with the mid-January capture of the southeastern town of Ras Kamboni, the Islamic Courts' final stronghold. According to a senior U.S. military intelligence officer, there were more than 1,000 Islamic Courts casualties in the battle for Ras Kamboni alone, and a number of hard drives belonging to senior Islamic Courts Union leaders—including Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, head of the group's consultative council—were captured.

Now the hard part begins. The transitional government faces what its permanent secretary in charge of international cooperation, Dahir Jibreel, calls "acute needs": Its soldiers and civil servants aren't receiving salaries, and the government hasn't started collecting taxes.

Jibreel provides a dramatic illustration of the shortages that the government is facing: Recently, at the presidential palace in Mogadishu, there was no food. To remedy this, the commander of presidential security persuaded relatives in Minneapolis to solicit donations from private U.S. citizens. They worked day and night, and were able to send several thousand dollars back to Somalia. But the fact that contributions from Somali expats are needed to stock the larders of the presidential palace speaks volumes.

Indeed, Jibreel believes that winning the war but losing the peace "is no longer just a concern; it's moving to a reality." Washington has allocated $40 million to Somalia but it's unclear how much of this will reach the transitional government. Some money has been earmarked for an anticipated African Union peacekeeping force, while other funds will go to nongovernmental organizations.

"At the end of the day, we want appropriations," Jibreel said. "We want money and resources to be given to implement what has to be done. The security forces of Somalia have to be established and maintained, the civil servants have to be paid, and we have to overcome the militias that are marauding around. We need resources—not earmarking for NGOs or U.N. organizations, but actual direct financial and technical assistance."

According to a senior U.S. military intelligence officer, the Pentagon and State Department are bickering about how to handle cash outlays to the transitional government. The Pentagon favors large cash transfers of the kind Jibreel calls for, while State wants to provide aid in smaller chunks with tighter control on who receives the money. State's goal is to prevent corruption and mismanagement of funds while encouraging the transitional government to seek a broad-based coalition for governing Somalia, probably including putative moderates from the Islamic Courts Union.

The intelligence officer disagrees with this approach. "The government needs the money now," he said. "It'll do the most good right now. If you want to see the return of the Islamic Courts Union, this is the perfect recipe. The United States has been criticized for how it's acted in Somalia in the past. We can't repeat our past mistakes and allow the Islamic Courts Union to take power again."

The transitional government's financial shortfall has direct implications for the two greatest challenges it faces. The first is preventing an insurgency. The head of the Islamic Courts Union's executive council, Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed (who was captured during the past week), has called for a move to insurgent fighting.

There is reason to believe that the Islamic Courts Union may succeed in mounting an insurgency. A senior military intelligence officer told me that its forces' ability to "melt away" as Ethiopian troops advance is reminiscent of the Taliban's dispersal after Kandahar fell in Afghanistan. Also, a confidential report drafted by the U.N.'s Monitoring Group on Somalia in late 2006 warns that the Islamic Courts Union "is fully capable of turn-

Daveed Gartenstein-Ross is a counterterrorism consultant and the author of My Year Inside Radical Islam.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AP/Mohamed Sheikh Nor

Somali government soldiers outside the presidential palace in Mogadishu, January 15

ing Somalia into what is currently an Iraq-type scenario, replete with roadside and suicide bombers, assassinations, and other forms of terrorist and insurgent-type activities."

If an insurgency is to be prevented, the fact that the government's soldiers haven't been paid is of utmost concern. Jibreel worries that these troops "could walk away in despair."

American military intelligence sources report that the "Golden Chain," a group of wealthy individuals from the Gulf states who have donated millions of dollars to al Qaeda, is backing the Islamic Courts financially. Moreover, donations have allegedly increased since major fighting broke out in Somalia in late 2006. If the transitional government's soldiers do not receive a salary for months at a time, it's likely they'll simply join the side that can pay them. Right now, that side is the Islamic Courts.

The second major challenge the transitional government faces is demonstrating that it can provide stability. The rise of the Islamic Courts was aided by the lawlessness that prevailed in Somalia after the fall of president Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991. Rival warlord factions dominated the country, and a Council on Foreign Relations backgrounder points out that the warlords' militias "were notorious for indiscriminate violence." There was a high incidence of rape, and Somalis were unable to travel freely "without fear of being killed."

Some Somalis were willing to accept the Islamic Courts' strict version of *sharia* law (people who tried to watch soccer matches were shot) because they viewed the group as a stabilizing force. If the country descends once more into chaos, the Islamic Courts may rise again—perhaps emerging stronger, since their opponents will have been discredited by their inability to maintain order.

This is another area where the transitional government's lack of resources may have a profound impact. Jibreel says, "There is no money for the administration to run, either in the capital or in the districts. There is no money to pay anybody working in the administration." Here surely the United States can help.

It is now widely recognized that the United States should not have disengaged from Somalia in 1994. The Bush administration should not make the same mistake. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Worthwhile U.N. Initiative!

A welcome defense of the disabled from an unlikely organization. BY WESLEY J. SMITH

Can anything good come out of the United Nations? Actually, yes. Little noted in December, the General Assembly adopted a "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities." If ratified by most member nations, the convention could strengthen protections for many people with disabilities.

This is no trivial matter. In many countries, people with disabilities face significant, sometimes life-threatening discrimination. According to a 1997 study published in the British medical journal *Lancet*, about 8 percent of all infants who die each year in the Netherlands are euthanized by physicians due to severe illness or disability. North Korea has been accused by defectors of killing disabled newborns, a charge made all the more credible by *New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof's assertion in 2003 that North Korea "systematically" exiles "mentally retarded and disabled people from the capital, so as not to mar its beauty." The People's Republic of China has legalized certain eugenics policies, while here in the United States, disability-rights activists complain that disabled patients face medical discrimination, such as being pressured into signing do-not-resuscitate orders when they enter the hospital with non-life-threatening conditions.

Of course, it wouldn't be an official action of the United Nations without containing an element of the surreal. Even though the convention focuses on the rights and intrinsic value of people with disabilities, because of the sausage-making process that epitomizes U.N. negotiations, the term "disability" is never defined. "There were two competing approaches to defining disability," Susan Yoshihara told me. Yoshihara is the executive vice president of the Catholic Family & Human Rights Institute (C-FAM), a conservative nongovernmental organization that participated in the negotiations. "Many representatives wanted an objective medical definition. But a few insisted upon a subjective social definition, which would have based disability on attitudinal barriers that some might face." Unable to reach consensus on the meaning of disability, the U.N. adopted a treaty that does not identify the people it intends to protect.

Still, the convention is a welcome reaffirmation of the principles that are "proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations which recognize the inherent dignity and worth and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family." In a world growing increasingly utilitarian, an international declaration unequivocally affirming that human life has intrinsic moral worth regardless of capacities and attributes is most welcome.

Toward this noble end, Article 10 of the convention reaffirms that "every human being has the inherent right to life" and, in principal, requires signatory countries to "take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others." This could be very good news for Dutch infants born with serious health problems or disabilities, as the Dutch parliament is well on the path to formally legalizing eugenic infanticide. If the Low Countries ratify the treaty, as expected, Dutch diplomatic representatives should be asked to justify their "compassionate" policy of allowing the killing of disabled babies in the face of this new international convention requiring the lives of disabled people be protected.

Article 25 seeks to guarantee "the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability." An important, one might say crucial, provision added to Article 25—thanks in large part to C-FAM and other conservative NGOs—is subsection F, which aims to prevent "discriminatory denial of health care or health services or food and fluids on the basis of disability."

If the policies enunciated by Article 25 (F) were embodied in our federal and state laws, the disabled would be provided with badly needed protections against discrimination in health care. As described more fully in these pages previously ("'Futile Care' and Its Friends," July 23, 2001), hospitals around the country are promulgating internal bioethical protocols that empower in-house committees to authorize doctors to refuse wanted life-sustaining treatment—including tube-supplied food and water—based on quality-of-life and resource considerations.

The ratification process begins March 7. Of course, well-intended international conventions like this can end up meaning very little in practice. Countries that do sign the convention may not carry out their obligations. And some countries won't sign on at all.

That latter category will include the United States. Even though Richard T. Miller, the U.S. representative to the negotiations, "warmly" congratulated "all those involved in this monumental and historic pro-

Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute, an attorney for the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide, and a special consultant to the Center for Bioethics and Culture.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cess," and despite our having been deeply involved in its negotiation, the United States announced, back in 2003, it would not "become party" to the convention. The stated reason was that the United States already has laws—particularly the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—that sufficiently protect the rights of disabled people. There are certainly valid reasons for refusing to sign the convention—such as a principled refusal to compromise national sovereignty—but the existence of the ADA is not one of them, since that law omits the explicit protections against medical discrimination that are centerpieces of the U.N. agreement. (The Vatican has stated it, too, will not sign the convention out of fear that vague language about "reproductive health" could promote abortion.)

Regardless of America's nonparticipation, much good should come from the adoption of the convention. First, the agreement creates an international standard of equal rights for people with disabilities. Since many nations care deeply about the views of the "international community," the convention could influence attitudes and legal protections for disabled people around the world. Formal adoption of the convention could also provide a rationale for international court cases being filed to enforce its provisions. Since many nations care deeply about the views of the "international community"—including, we have recently seen, some United States Supreme Court justices—the convention could influence attitudes and legal protections for disabled people around the world.

There is another lesson here. The positive impact that C-FAM and other conservative NGOs had on the terms of the convention—for example, the food and fluids provision—teaches a valuable lesson. Many conservative organizations eschew obtaining NGO status with the United Nations because they loathe internationalism, disdain the U.N., and expect America not to be bound by these agreements.

But such standoffishness is woefully shortsighted. Like it or not, many of the most important social and legal policies of the twenty-first century are going to be materially influenced by international protocols such as this one. These agreements are molded substantially behind the scenes by NGOs—most of which are currently leftist in their political outlooks and relativistic in their social orientation. This makes for a stacked deck. If conservatives hope to influence the moral values of the future, they are going to have to hold their collective noses and get into the game. ♦

Michael Ramirez

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Duke's Tenured Vigilantes

The scandalous rush to judgment in the lacrosse "rape" case

By Charlotte Allen

The Duke University "lacrosse rape case" is all but over. On Friday, January 12, the prosecutor, Durham County District Attorney Mike Nifong, petitioned the North Carolina attorney general's office to be recused from the case, and the office complied, appointing a pair of special prosecutors to take over. Nifong's recusal, it is widely assumed, paves the way for the dismissal of all remaining charges against the three defendants—suspended (but recently reinstated) Duke sophomores and lacrosse team members Reade Seligmann and Collin Finnerty, and a team co-captain, David Evans, who graduated last year—owing to a complete lack of physical, forensic, and credible testimonial evidence linking the three to any sexual or other violent crimes.

Nifong's resignation from the case followed on the heels of two other events. One was an extended interview with the alleged victim conducted by one of Nifong's investigators on December 21—the first time anyone from the district attorney's office had talked to the accuser since Nifong announced he was personally taking over the case from the Durham police on Monday, March 27, 2006. That was exactly two weeks after the accuser, an African-American woman then 27, first said she had been sexually attacked by white members of the Duke men's lacrosse team at around midnight, the night of March 13-14.

During her December 21 interview with prosecutors, the accuser offered either the seventh or the twelfth (depending on how you count) significantly different version of the story she had been telling medical personnel, police officers, and news reporters about what happened after she, an employee of a Durham escort service, showed up at about 11:30 P.M. on March 13 to do some stripping and exotic dancing for a party at a Durham house rented by Evans and two other Duke lacrosse captains. This time around, the accuser, contradicting all her earlier accounts, said she could not remember whether she had actually been penetrated vaginally by the penis of any of the three lacrosse players whom she had identified as her assailants, which prompted Nifong to drop the rape charges the following day (charges of sexual assault, an equally grave felony, and kidnapping still stand against all three as of this writing). The accuser also altered her story about who had attacked her and when, now maintaining that Seligmann, then age 20, had merely held her leg and looked on while the other two, 19-year-old Finnerty and 23-year-old Evans, attacked her orally, anally, and vaginally in one of the house bathrooms. Earlier she had insisted that all three—or perhaps as many as four, five, or even 20 lacrosse players—had participated in the sexual assault as well as kicking, beating, and attempting to strangle her.

Her descriptions of her assailants' appearances also changed on December 21, apparently so as to accommodate the lanky, six-foot-three Finnerty; she had earlier described all three as chubby or heavyset and of medium height. Finally, she moved the time of the alleged assault a half-hour backwards, to around 11:30 on the night of March 13, which could get around Seligmann's airtight alibi of cell-phone, taxicab, and ATM records indicating he had left the house before the midnight hour at which she had previously maintained that the gang rape occurred.

The other event that undoubtedly inspired Nifong to withdraw from the case was a mid-December revelation under oath by Brian Meehan, head of a private testing laboratory under contract with the Durham district attorney's office. Meehan revealed that DNA samples from at least five different unidentified men had been collected from the underwear, pubic hair, and private parts of the

Charlotte Allen is the author, most recently, of The Human Christ.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accuser during a medical examination at Duke University's hospital shortly after the alleged gang assault, and that none of that DNA matched Seligmann, Finnerty, Evans, or any other previously tested member of the lacrosse team. Meehan testified—and also told *60 Minutes* for their January 14 broadcast—that he, with some input from Nifong, had deliberately left these results out of a lab report issued on May 12, three and a half weeks after the April 17 indictment of Seligmann and Finnerty (Evans was indicted on May 15, the day after he graduated). A prosecutor's deliberate withholding of exculpatory evidence from a criminal defendant (in this case, evidence that would account for the mild swelling around her vagina that a nurse at the Duke hospital had reported, and would also impeach her statement that she had not had sexual relations for at least a week before the alleged assault) violates Durham and North Carolina procedural rules and possibly the Fifth Amendment's guarantee of due process in criminal cases.

Nifong may also face sanctions from the North Carolina State Bar for other ethically debatable conduct: obtaining a court order for all 46 white members of the 47-man Duke lacrosse team on March 23 to submit to DNA testing, even though he knew by then that the accuser had not been able to identify a single one of them as a suspect in two separate police photo lineups (the DNA tests exonerated all 46); for ordering a third photo lineup on April 4 after the first two had failed, which the accuser was told consisted only of pictures of lacrosse players (it was from this lineup that she picked out Seligmann, Finnerty, and Evans); and for publicly denouncing members of the lacrosse team as "hooligans," insisting—without bothering to interview his star witness—that "gang-like rape activity" had occurred, and urging those who had attended the party to "come forward" and break the "stone wall of silence" with which they were supposedly covering up a gross crime. Nifong seemed not to have read his own police reports, in which Kim Roberts, a second woman hired from the escort service that night (and who also changed her story several times), called the accuser's rape allegations "a crock."

Nifong, courting Durham's substantial black vote in a May 2 Democratic primary for reelection as district attorney (a primary that he won handily, as well as the election itself), also played the race card, pointing out that "racial slurs and general racial hostility" had accompanied the alleged attack. Indeed, there had been two racial epithets let loose that night, as the accuser and Roberts left the party after dancing for only a few minutes (according to Roberts) because the accuser, paid $400 in advance, declined to perform, whether because she was insulted by crude remarks made by the partygoers, because she was too drunk to dance when she got there, or because she had combined alcohol with a prescription muscle relaxant she had taken earlier in the day. As the two women departed, one lacrosse player shouted the n-word at Roberts and another yelled, "Hey, bitch, thank your grandpa for my nice cotton shirt!"—a riff on a Chris Rock routine that the shouter undoubtedly thought was funny. Everyone would agree that both remarks were unacceptable, but there is no evidence that either Finnerty or Evans made either of them, and Seligmann was already elsewhere, as electronic records showed.

Mike Nifong's handling of the case was clearly outrageous. But he would probably not have gone so far, indeed would not have dared to go so far, had he not been egged on by two other groups that rushed just as quickly to judge the three accused young men guilty of gross and racially motivated carnal violence. Despite the repeated attempts by the three to clear themselves, a substantial and vocal percentage—about one-fifth—of the Duke University arts and sciences faculty and nearly all of the mainstream print media in America quickly organized themselves into a hanging party. Throughout the spring of 2006 and indeed well into the late summer, Nifong had the nearly unanimous backing of this country's (and especially Duke's) intellectual elite as he explored his lurid theories of sexual predation and racist stonewalling.

"They fed off each other," said Steven Baldwin, a Duke chemistry professor who finally broke his faculty colleagues' own wall of silence on October 24, publishing a letter in the Duke student newspaper, the *Chronicle*, denouncing his fellow professors for what he called their "shameful" treatment of Seligmann and Finnerty and rebuking the Duke administration for having "disowned its lacrosse-playing student athletes." In April, Duke president and English professor Richard Brodhead had abruptly suspended not only Seligmann and Finnerty but also the remainder of the Duke lacrosse season, plus a third player, Ryan McFadyen (also recently reinstated), who had nothing to do with the alleged assault but had made the mistake of sending an email to his teammates on the early morning of March 14 describing a plan to "kill" and "skin" some "strippers" in his dorm room (like the "cotton shirt" remark, this was another tasteless joke, parodying Bret Easton Ellis's novel *American Psycho*). That same day, April 5, Brodhead told the lacrosse team's coach, Michael Pressler, that he had until the end of the day to leave campus for good.

"The faculty enabled Nifong," Baldwin said in an interview. "He could say, 'Here's a significant portion of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the arts and sciences faculty who feel this way, so I can go after these kids because these faculty agree with me.' It was a mutual attitude."

Indeed, it was the Duke faculty that could be said to have cooked up the ambient language that came to clothe virtually all media descriptions of the assault case—that boilerplate about "race, gender, and class" (or maybe "race, gender, sexuality, and class") and "privileged white males" that you could not read a news story about the assault case without encountering, whether in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or *Newsweek* for example. The journalists channeled the academics.

Although outsiders know Duke mostly as an expensive preppie enclave that fields Division I athletic teams, the university's humanities and social sciences departments—literature, anthropology, and especially women's studies and African-American studies—foster exactly the opposite kind of culture. Those departments (and especially Duke's robustly "postmodern" English department, put in place by postmodernist celebrity Stanley Fish before his departure in 1998) are famous throughout academia as repositories of all that is trendy and hyper-politicized in today's ivy halls: angry feminism, ethnic victimology, dense, jargon-laden analyses of capitalism and "patriarchy," and "new historicism"—a kind of upgraded Marxism that analyzes art and literature in terms of efforts by powerful social elites to brainwash everybody else.

It was the Duke faculty that cooked up the ambient language that came to clothe virtually all media descriptions of the assault case—that boilerplate about "race, gender, and class" (or maybe "race, gender, sexuality, and class") and "privileged white males."

The Duke University Press is the laughingstock of the publishing world, offering such titles as *Appropriating Blackness: Performance and the Politics of Authenticity* and *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Phrases such as "race, gender, and class" and "privileged white males" come as second nature to the academics who do this kind of writing, which analyzes nearly all social phenomena in terms of race, gender, class, and white male privilege. A couple of months after the lacrosse party, Karla F.C. Holloway, a professor of English and African-American studies at Duke, published a reflection on the incident titled "Coda: Bodies of Evidence" in an online feminist journal sponsored by Barnard College. "Judgments about the issues of race and gender that the lacrosse team's sleazy conduct exposed cannot be left to the courtroom," Holloway wrote. "Despite the damaging logic that associates the credibility of a socio-cultural context to the outcome of the legal process, we will find that even as the accusations that might be legally processed are confined to a courtroom, the cultural and social issues excavated in this upheaval linger."

There was a fascinating irony in this. Postmodern theorists pride themselves in discerning what they call "metanarratives." They argue that such concepts as, say, Christianity or patriotism or the American legal system are no more than socially constructed tall tales that the postmodernists can then "deconstruct" to unmask the real purpose behind them, which is (say the postmodernists) to prop up societal structures of—yes, you guessed it—race, gender, class, and white male privilege. Nonetheless, in the Duke lacrosse case the theorists manufactured a metanarrative of their own, based upon the fact that Durham, North Carolina, is in the South, and the alleged assailants happened to be white males from families wealthy enough to afford Duke's tuition, while their alleged victim was an impoverished black woman who, as she told the Raleigh *News and Observer* in a credulous profile of her published on March 25, was stripping only to support her two children and to pay her tuition as a student at North Carolina Central University, a historically black state college in Durham that is considerably less prestigious than Duke. All the symbolic elements of a juicy race/gender/class/white-male-privilege yarn were present. The theorists went to town.

The metanarrative they came up with was three parts *Mandingo* and one part Josephine Baker: rich white plantation owners and their scions lusting after tawny-skinned beauties and concocting fantasies of their outsize sexual appetites so as to rape, abuse, and prostitute them with impunity. It mattered little that all three accused lacrosse players hailed from the Northeast, or that there have been few, if any, actual incidents of gang rapes of black women by wealthy white men during the last 40 years. Karla Holloway's online essay was replete with imagery derived from this lurid antebellum template. She described the accuser and her fellow stripper as "kneeling" in "service to" white male "presumption of privilege," and as "bodies available for taunt and tirade, whim and whis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

per" in "the subaltern spaces of university life and culture." On April 13, Wahneema Lubiano, a Duke literature professor, wrote in another online article, "I understand the impulse of those outraged and who see the alleged offenders as the exemplars of the upper end of the class hierarchy, the politically dominant race and ethnicity, the dominant gender, the dominant sexuality, and the dominant social group on campus."

The academic-speak of Lubiano and Holloway was undoubtedly a bit arcane for the average reader, but there were plenty of news reporters and commentators to translate the pair's concepts into plain English. On April 22, *Slate* legal columnist Dahlia Lithwick penned what read like a pop version of Lubiano: "The Duke lacrosse team's rape scandal cuts too deeply into this country's most tender places: race and class and gender." Lithwick alluded to "[m]ounds and mounds of significant physical evidence" that a rape had occurred (this was *after* the meager results of the accuser's medical examination had been publicized as well as the negative DNA tests for the lacrosse team) and maintained that anyone who believed the players were innocent had a "creepy closet under the stairs" of his brain. Lithwick's position was that the facts of the case were essentially unknowable, as though this were *Rashomon* and not a matter of whether a grave felony had occurred that could send three young men to prison.

Following just behind Lithwick was Eugene Robinson of the *Washington Post* on April 25. "[I]t's impossible to avoid thinking of all the black women who were violated by drunken white men in the American South over the centuries," Robinson wrote. He continued: "The master-slave relationship, the tradition of *droit du seigneur*, the use of sexual possession as an instrument of domination—all this ugliness floods the mind, unbidden, and refuses to leave." He characterized Duke as a hotbed of "preppy privilege" and referred to the accuser as "the victim," whose main mistake had been choosing outcall stripping as a profession. On May 24, another *Washington Post* writer, Lynne Duke, weighed in with yet more Robinson-style rhetoric: "In the sordid but contested details of the case, African-American women have heard echoes of a history of some white men sexually abusing black women—and a stereotype of black women as hypersexual beings and thus fair game." Like Lithwick, Lynne Duke placed great stock in the supposed results of the accuser's medical examination, which even then were known to be ambiguous.

This race/gender/class/white-male-privilege scenario that the press so eagerly bought into was supplemented by another animus that plagued several key Duke faculty members: a deep antipathy to the school's athletic programs—especially the lacrosse program, typically peopled by the graduates of exclusive prep schools who exemplify "white privilege" to the program's critics—and to the student-athletes who participate in them. The *News & Observer* article of March 25 that featured the uncritical interview with the accuser ("Dancer Gives Details of Ordeal") also quoted Paul Haagen, a Duke sports-law professor, stating that athletes who participated in "helmet sports" such as football, hockey, and lacrosse ("sports of violence" was Haagen's other term) were highly prone to violence against women. A Duke English professor, Houston Baker (who has since moved on to Vanderbilt), picked up the theme in a March 29 public letter to Duke's provost, Peter Lange: "How many more people of color must fall victim to violent, white, male, athletic privilege?" Calling for the immediate dismissal from the university of the entire lacrosse team and its coaches, Baker characterized the events of March 13-14 as "abhorrent sexual assault, verbal racial violence, and drunken white male privilege loosed amongst us." On March 31, Duke history professor William Chafe wrote an op-ed in the *Chronicle* declaring that "sex and race have always interacted in a vicious chemistry of power, privilege, and control" and comparing the behavior of the lacrosse team to the 1955 lynching in Mississippi of Emmett Till, a visiting black teenager from Chicago who might have whistled at a white woman.

Another Duke historian, Peter Wood, and Orin Starn, a professor of cultural anthropology, began expressing hope that Duke would drop its preppie-ridden lacrosse program permanently and perhaps even withdraw from Division I competition altogether, according to a story by Peter Boyer in the September 4 *New Yorker*. In a June interview with an alternative newspaper, Wood characterized Duke's lacrosse players as "cynical, arrogant, callous, dismissive—you could almost say openly hostile." According to Boyer, when Wood had received a negative evaluation from a student for a course he taught in 2004, he concluded that it had to have come from one of the ten lacrosse players taking the course. Wood also confided to Boyer salacious details of a booze-fueled and indisputably vulgar campus "hook-up" culture of casual sex and free-wheeling parties among Duke's athletes and fraternity jocks that could have been torn from the pages of Tom Wolfe's Duke *roman à clef I Am Charlotte Simmons*. That novel had been pooh-poohed by most of the intellectual elite as the voyeuristic fantasies of an un-hip old man when it was published in 2004, but by 2006 many members of the Duke faculty, including Wood, were parroting its observations. As in Wolfe's novel, the good-looking Duke co-eds who attached themselves to lacrosse players (their campus nickname was "lacrosstitutes") were at the very apex of the Duke female hierarchy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Karla Holloway's online article similarly called for unspecified curtailments in the Duke athletic programs. "[S]ports reinforces exactly those behaviors of entitlement which have been and can be so abusive to women and girls and those 'othered' by their sports' history of membership," she wrote. Holloway also scolded the Duke women's lacrosse team for showing solidarity with the accused men by wearing their jersey numbers on their sweatbands during a playoff game.

As might be expected, the press took up the anti-lacrosse meme as well, showering hostile attention on what had been previously regarded as a niche sport. On March 30, *Baltimore Sun* sports columnist David Steele described lacrosse as "a sport of privilege played by children of privilege and supported by families of privilege" and hinted that the Duke team ought to apologize en masse to the stripper-accuser. In a March 31 piece titled "Bonded in Barbarity," *New York Times* sports columnist Selena Roberts wrote: "At the intersection of entitlement and enablement, there is Duke University, virtuous on the outside, debauched on the inside. . . . The season is over, but the paradox lives on in Duke's lacrosse team, a group of privileged players of fine pedigree entangled in a night that threatens to belie their social standing as human beings." Roberts accused the team members of maintaining a "code of silence" to cover up the alleged crime.

As might be expected, the press took up the anti-lacrosse meme as well, showering hostile attention on what had been previously regarded as a niche sport. According to Newsweek, *"players tend to be at once macho and entitled, a sometimes unfortunate combination."*

On April 23, Fox News columnist Susan Estrich, a law professor at the University of Southern California, wrote an article titled "Why Would Accuser in Duke Rape Case Lie?" Seeming to channel Nifong (and also Jesse Jackson, who had entered the fray to offer the accuser a full scholarship to continue her studies at North Carolina Central), Estrich harped on the theme of stonewalling and wondered why no lacrosse parent had said to her son, "you go in there and tell the police the truth about what happened." It is hard to believe that Estrich was not aware by that date of Seligmann's airtight alibi, the procedurally flawed April 4 photo lineup, the negative DNA results for the 46 players (those were released on April 10), and repeated efforts by lawyers for the accused to present Nifong with evidence of their clients' innocence, including an April 18 meeting with Seligmann's attorney that Nifong curtly cut short. Instead, Estrich, taking an odd stance for a professor whose specialty is criminal law, castigated the three young men for having the audacity to "hire . . . lawyers." The purpose of this exercise of the Sixth Amendment right to counsel was "to trash the victim and the prosecutor," she declared.

Newsweek had this to say about the lacrosse team in a May 1 story: "Strutting lacrosse players are a distinctive and familiar breed on elite campuses along the Eastern Seaboard. Because the game until recently was played mostly at prep schools and in upper-middle-class communities on New York's Long Island and outside Baltimore, the players tend to be at once macho and entitled, a sometimes unfortunate combination."

One likely reason for the speed and enthusiasm with which members of the Duke faculty and the media produced their morality play that simultaneously demonized lacrosse, wealth, the white race, the South, and the male sex was that it offered something otherwise missing in Nifong's case: a motive for the players, whose time-dated photographs at the March 13-14 party show them sitting torpidly on couches in the house living room, to rise suddenly in a state of power-drunk frenzy and commit gruesome acts of sexual violence. Means and opportunity were presumably there that night, but why would these "macho and entitled" young athletes who could have any Duke "lacrosstitute" of their choice free of charge, or, given their parents' money, pay for a real prostitute if they wanted to, bother with rape?

The race/gender/class/male privilege scenario also absolved its promulgators of having to consider the fact that the evidence of the players' guilt was flimsy from the outset and grew flimsier as each day passed. Indeed, Lubiano, in her online article, dismissed the whole idea of evidence—and thus legal guilt or innocence—as just another set of socially constructed "narratives" to be deconstructed by her. The accused were apparently guilty by reason of their "dominant" social position, which made them "perfect offenders" in Lubiano's eyes.

Not surprisingly then, some 88 Duke faculty members, including Holloway, Baker, and Chafe, signed a full-page advertisement drafted by Lubiano and published in the *Chronicle* on April 6.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The "listening statement," as they called it, did not exactly endorse Nifong's confident assertions of criminal activity and guilt. What the ad did endorse was a series of campus demonstrations in late March and early April at which Duke students, outside groups such as the New Black Panthers, and (reportedly) some members of the Duke faculty had shouted "rapists" and "time to confess," hurled death threats, banged on pots outside lacrosse players' residences at early-morning hours, and distributed "Wanted" posters bearing the photographs of all 46 white lacrosse players. "To the students speaking individually and to the protestors making collective noise, thank you for not waiting and for making yourselves heard," the ad read. It also stated: "These students are shouting and whispering about what happened to this young woman and to themselves." That suggested the 88 signers believed the accuser's story.

The faculty ad, together with such other faculty phenomena as Baker's letter and Chafe's op-ed, undoubtedly contributed to Duke president Richard Brodhead's impulsive and abrupt treatment of everyone at the university who might have had anything to do with either lacrosse or the March 13-14 party: firing the coach, canceling the season, suspending McFadyen over his vile email, suspending Seligmann and Finnerty after their indictments without meeting with either, and seeming to disbelieve the word of the lacrosse captains (including Evans), who had met with him on March 28 and assured him that they had fully cooperated with the police and that no sexual assault had taken place at the party. As former Harvard president Larry Summers learned to his chagrin in 2005, a college president courts big trouble by trying to buck a radicalized arts and sciences faculty. Furthermore, Brodhead seemed to be rewarding the "Group of 88" for its "thank you" ad in the *Chronicle*, setting up a "Campus Culture Initiative" to investigate racism and sexism at Duke on May 5 and appointing two of the ad's signers, Karla Holloway and anthropology professor Anne Allison, to chair two of its four committees and Peter Wood to chair a third.

"There just wasn't anything clear in Brodhead's statements that we were going to believe our own students," said Michael Gustafson, a Duke engineering professor who has criticized the university's handling of the March 13-14 incident. "There was obviously conduct with which Duke did not agree—parties with underage consumption of alcohol, hiring strippers, and if that was the whole story, then Brodhead was absolutely right to condemn it. The problem comes into play when there's a rape allegation. There was never a clear distinction drawn between those incidents and rape, so there was never a clear sense that the students were innocent until proven guilty."

As the summer progressed, evidence of that innocence mounted: Witnesses attested to the accuser's erratic behavior before and after the alleged crime, and her history of never-proven accusations of violence and gang rape. In June a faculty committee commissioned by Brodhead to investigate the lacrosse team and headed by Duke law professor James Coleman issued its report. The 25-page document found no evidence of racism or sexism on the part of team members and found both their academic performance and their off-campus behavior to be generally exemplary (Wood turned out to be the only one of ten surveyed professors who had a problem with lacrosse players). "By all accounts, the lacrosse players are a cohesive, hard working, disciplined, and respectful athletic team," the report stated. What problems there were that had resulted in disciplinary citations by Duke centered around alcohol: underage drinking, booze in dorm rooms, noise, public urination, and on one occasion, stealing a pizza—but in that respect, the report found that lacrosse players were indistinguishable from the Duke undergraduate population in general. On June 13, Coleman, a criminal-law specialist, called for a special prosecutor to replace Nifong on the case. "It's unusual [for a prosecutor early in an investigation] to state that a crime occurred and that a group of people was responsible for it," Coleman told me. "That led to the assumption by a lot of people that a rape had occurred and that the accused were not cooperating with the police. That's why I was so outraged."

Nonetheless, news articles and columns continued to flow from the mainstream media dissecting the accused players' "privileged" backgrounds and the lush green lawns in front of their parents' suburban houses. Finnerty and two former prep-school classmates had previously been arrested for simple assault in a November 5, 2005, brawl outside a Washington, D.C., bar. It was the kind of first-time offense that usually results in a quick guilty plea plus community service (that was how his friends' cases were resolved), but because of his indictment in North Carolina, Finnerty was obliged to stand trial in order to be convicted (and placed on supervised probation). In a July 13 column, the *Washington Post*'s Marc Fisher mocked the "battalions of lawyers" hired by Finnerty's family and the "upstanding young gentlemen in their blue blazers and pressed khakis" who stood as character witnesses for him. Fisher suggested that the bar fight "does open a window onto a larger truth" about Finnerty's propensity to "find fun in tormenting the innocent." (In a telephone interview, Fisher denied that he had been referring to the Duke sexual assault case.)

On June 27, *washingtonpost.com* law columnist

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Andrew Cohen excoriated some of his fellow journalists for reporting criticisms of Nifong's handling of the case (*Newsweek* by then had done an about-face and was openly skeptical of the rape charges). "I suspect race and money and access to the media have a lot to do with it," Cohen wrote. As late as August 25, the *New York Times* carried a front-page story parroting an *ex post facto* memorandum prepared by a Durham police officer at Nifong's request that detailed numerous injuries allegedly inflicted on the accuser that contradicted the contemporaneous reports of medical personnel and other police. That story was ripped to shreds a few days later in *Slate* by Stuart Taylor Jr. of the *National Journal*. Taylor, along with Rush Limbaugh and a handful of bloggers—notably Brooklyn College history professor KC Johnson and La Shawn Barber, an African-American woman—were nearly the only members of the media to express skepticism about the accuser's story from the outset.

Eventually, and especially after an October 15 episode of *60 Minutes* showed a video of the accuser pole-dancing at a club a week after her supposed trauma, a handful of news commentators admitted they had rushed to judgment. On December 18, after Nifong dismissed the rape charges, Susan Estrich reversed herself and called for his removal from the case. Suddenly, it would seem, Estrich had discovered that the April 4 photo lineup procedures had been "unduly suggestive" and that the decision to indict the three players had been made before the results of the DNA tests on the victim's person were in. In an email, Estrich blamed Nifong for misleading outsiders and taking advantage of a disturbed woman who, "liar though she may be, is also a victim."

Duke English professor Cathy N. Davidson, published an op-ed in the News & Observer *on January 5 that mostly blamed "right-wing 'blog hooligans'" for trying to make her and the other signers look as though they had prejudged the lacrosse players.*

Lacrosse is now back at Duke, a group of Duke economics professors have signed a statement supporting Brodhead's decision to rescind the suspensions of Finnerty and Seligmann (the university had quietly changed those suspensions to less opprobrious administrative leaves at the end of the summer), and a D.C. judge vacated Finnerty's assault conviction right after Nifong dropped the rape charges. Neither Finnerty nor Seligmann is back on campus, however, and one very large issue still lurks: an angry and unrepentant Group of 88 on the Duke arts and sciences faculty.

Karla Holloway resigned her position as chairman of the Campus Culture Initiative's race committee to protest the re-admission of the two players. One of the signers, Duke English professor Cathy N. Davidson, published an op-ed in the *News & Observer* on January 5 that was sharply critical of that convenient scapegoat, Mike Nifong, but she mostly blamed "right-wing 'blog hooligans'" for trying to make her and the other signers look as though they had prejudged the lacrosse players. Tossing in a few red herrings, Davidson complained that the real "social disaster" in the Duke case was that "18 percent of the American population lives below the poverty line" and "women's salaries for similar jobs are substantially less than men's." Plus, we don't have "national health care or affordable childcare," Davidson wrote.

Other signers of the ad may be more worried. One of them, political science visiting professor Kim Curtis, has been sued by Kyle Dowd, a 2006 Duke graduate who alleges he got an F in her class after she discovered he was a lacrosse player (the university later upped the grade to a D, claiming a calculation error; Curtis did not respond to an email requesting a comment). Another signer, Duke philosophy professor Alex Rosenberg, explained in news interviews that he had signed the ad only to protest underage drinking at Duke and the hiring of strippers by students "when they could get as much hookup as they wanted from rich and attractive Duke coeds." Yet on January 17, several members of the Group of 88 published an open letter on the Internet, a defiant *je ne regrette rien*: "There have been public calls to the authors to retract the ad or apologize for it, as well as calls for action against them and attacks on their character. We reject all of these."

The week before, Brodhead had issued a "letter to the Duke community" that seemed to attempt to mollify the university's critics (including many alumni) who had criticized his peremptory actions against Finnerty and Seligmann. He described suspension as "not a disciplinary measure." Yet the letter seemed even more intent on placating the arts and sciences faculty, whom he described as victims of "blogs and emails" that attacked them "in highly repugnant and vicious terms." Brodhead described the sexual-assault allegations as having raised "troubling questions about sexual violence and racial subjugation." It was back to business as usual at Duke, back to the business of metanarratives. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How Arafat Got Away with Murder

The State Department covered up his responsibility for the 1973 slaughter of two American diplomats

By Scott W. Johnson

Twenty years before he joined Bill Clinton and Yitzhak Rabin in Washington for that famous handshake—and proceeded to become Clinton's most frequent foreign guest at the White House—Yasser Arafat planned and directed the murder of an American ambassador and his deputy chief of mission. From the first moment of the deadly operation, which took place in Khartoum on March 1, 1973, the State Department possessed direct evidence of Arafat's responsibility, yet neither the State Department nor any other government agency made public its knowledge. Indeed, as recently as the summer of 2002, the State Department denied that such evidence existed. Across seven administrations, the State Department hewed to silence and denial.

Until last spring. In June 2006, the department's Office of the Historian quietly posted an authoritative summary of the events dated June 1973. The source of the summary is not given, but the CIA had previously produced it in redacted form in response to a Freedom of Information Act request. Prepared by the CIA on the basis of intercepted communications, it baldly states: "The Khartoum operation was planned and carried out with the full knowledge and personal approval of Yasser Arafat." What happened?

In late February 1973, the National Security Agency listening post in Cyprus picked up radio traffic including Arafat, Salah Kalaf (a cofounder of Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization faction, Fatah), and others strongly suggesting that a PLO operation was about to be conducted in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. National Security Agency analyst Jim Welsh received word of the operation at his post in Washington and helped draft a message warning the U.S. embassy in Khartoum that a PLO operation was imminent. Welsh and his NSA colleagues marked the message for transmission with a "flash" (highest) precedence. The State Department watch officer unaccountably downgraded the message for routine transmission. As a result, it arrived several days late.

On March 1, the embassy of Saudi Arabia in Khartoum held a going-away party for U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission George Curtis Moore. A gang of eight who identified themselves as members of the Black September Organization stormed the party. The terrorists seized the embassy and held Moore and two others hostage—U.S. ambassador to Sudan Cleo Noel Jr. and Guy Eid, chargé d'affaires at the Belgian embassy. (Two other diplomats were seized and released.)

The Black September operatives issued several demands: the release of Sirhan Sirhan, the assassin of Robert Kennedy; the release of a Black September leader held in Jordan; and the release of several members of the terrorist Baader-Meinhof gang held in Germany. On March 2, President Nixon and representatives of the other two governments announced that they would not negotiate with terrorists for the release of the diplomats.

Using coded instructions, Arafat's closest Fatah associate in Beirut, Salah Khalaf, directed the murder of Noel, Moore, and Eid. Arafat himself separately confirmed the instructions. At 9:00 P.M. that very night, the Black September operatives marched Noel, Moore, and Eid to the embassy basement and murdered them with forty rounds from Kalashnikov weapons fired from the feet to the head in order to inflict maximum suffering on the victims.

Arafat ordered his operatives to surrender to Sudanese authorities. "Your mission has ended," he told them, in an intercepted communication. "Explain your just cause to [the] great Sudanese masses and international opinion. We are with you on the same road."

Scott W. Johnson is a Minneapolis attorney and contributor to the Power Line *blog.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The next morning the eight operatives surrendered. Two were quickly released. The remaining six were tried and convicted in June. At trial the leader stated that they had acted "under the orders of the Palestine Liberation Organization and should only be questioned by that organization." The six convicted operatives were immediately turned over to their PLO patrons. In November 1974, when Yasser Arafat made his famous debut at the United Nations in New York wearing a sidearm, he was accompanied by Ali Hassan Salameh, the chief planner of the Khartoum operation, and several other key participants.

Communications intelligence afforded the State Department immediate knowledge of every relevant fact regarding these events. The operation was a matter of life-and-death interest to the department's field officers. The contemporaneous State Department cables reflect this intense concern within the State Department regarding the security issues raised by the murders. The department received reports from its embassies and missions conveying the results of intelligence inquiries, and the secretary of state, William Rogers, himself promptly disseminated his conclusions regarding responsibility for the operation based on these reports and other intelligence sources.

The cables demonstrate that in the immediate aftermath of the assault, the State Department had concluded that Black September was nothing more than a front for Fatah and that Arafat himself had directed the operation resulting in the assassination of Noel and Moore. Both points are made over and over again in the cables to and from the secretary of state.

As the State Department reached conclusions regarding ultimate responsibility for the operation, it dispatched its representatives to meet with sympathetic governments and attempt to persuade them to take appropriate precautionary measures. The American ambassador to Tunisia, for example, met with Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba on March 10 to convey the department's concerns about Fatah in light of the Black September attack in Khartoum: "I referred to Sudanese government's revelation that head of Fatah office in Khartoum masterminded Khartoum assassinations. . . . I noted that there is Fatah office in almost every Arab capital operating openly and, in light of Khartoum tragedy, this has clear implications."

On March 13, Secretary Rogers issued a comprehensive cable summarizing the department's conclusions and sent it to American embassies around the world. Discovered by researcher Russ Braley in the Nixon archives, the Rogers cable states: "Question of link between Black September Organization (BSO) and Fatah has been subject of much public discussion since murder of U.S. diplomats in Khartoum. Fatah leader Arafat has disavowed connection with BSO." The cable then attributes the following statements to an intelligence brief prepared by the department and the CIA: "The Black September Organization (BSO) is a cover term for Fatah's terrorist operations executed by Fatah's intelligence organization. . . . Fatah funds, facilities, and personnel are used in these operations. . . . For all intents and purposes no significant distinction now can be made between the BSO and Fatah. . . . Fatah leader Yasser Arafat has now been described in recent intelligence as having given approval to the Khartoum operation prior to its inception."

The murders of Noel and Moore convulsed the State Department. One would never know it, however, from reading Henry Kissinger's invaluable memoirs of the period during which he served as national security adviser (early 1969 to January 1975) and secretary of state (concurrently, September 1973 to January 1977). President Nixon replaced Rogers that summer with Kissinger. Kissinger's memoirs maintain a discreet silence regarding Arafat's responsibility for the Khartoum operation. Noting only that Noel and Moore were killed by "Black September Palestinian terrorists," Kissinger makes no mention of Arafat, Fatah, or the PLO in this connection.

Set against the backdrop of the detailed knowledge possessed by the government (certainly including Kissinger himself), Kissinger's silence provides a valuable clue to understanding the State Department's public silence about Arafat's responsibility for the murders of Noel and Moore and the subsequent U.S. treatment of Yasser Arafat. In the fall of 1973 and early 1974, as part of his larger diplomatic efforts in the Middle East, Kissinger authorized the late Vernon Walters, then deputy director of central intelligence, to undertake the first meetings of an American representative with the PLO. In a sentence that makes little sense outside the context of Khartoum, Kissinger states in his memoir that after Walters's second meeting with Arafat's representative, "attacks on Americans—at least by Arafat's faction of the PLO—ceased." With his "characteristic swaggering efficiency and discretion" (Kissinger's words), Walters seems to have worked out a *modus vivendi* that precluded any accounting with Arafat for the murders of Noel and Moore. (Kissinger did not respond to my request for an interview. Walters's own 1978 memoir, *Silent Missions*, says nothing about these events.) By June 1974, Thomas Ross was reporting in the *Chicago Tribune* that crucial State Department cables from the American embassy in Khartoum had been destroyed on the basis of an order that "could have come only from a high level in the State Department or the White House."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bettmann / Corbis

Pistol-packin' Palestinian: Arafat at the United Nations, November 1974

The government's failure to make any public issue of Arafat's responsibility had unfortunate consequences. On the one hand, it abetted the impulse to appease enemies that runs so strong in the State Department. In his well-researched 1993 book *Assassination in Khartoum*, former foreign service officer David Korn recalls that Nixon visited Foggy Bottom on March 6 to speak at the laying of a memorial plaque in honor of Noel and Moore. Korn's text seethes with anger over the deaths of his former colleagues, accusing Nixon of seeking to "exculpate" himself. Korn of course faults the Black September operatives and their Sudanese protectors. Yet he reserves his deepest indignation for Nixon, blaming him for "having triggered the murders of the two Americans and the Belgian" by refusing to make concessions to the Black September operatives. Korn also faults Kissinger for this no-concessions policy.

The eminent diplomat Charles Hill, now on the faculty at Yale, served at high levels in the State Department before and after the murders. By 1975 he had become an aide to Kissinger on the policy planning staff. Although Hill and his colleagues knew nothing of the communications intelligence showing Arafat's responsibility, Hill remembers there being no doubt in his circle of professionals on the seventh floor of the department that Arafat bore ultimate responsibility for the operation. Hill recalls that the murders were the subject of frequent, intense discussion among desk officers and leaders at Foggy Bottom for roughly three years afterward.

By the early years of the Carter administration, according to Hill, the institutional memory of the event had largely been lost. The failure of the government generally or the State Department specifically to make a public issue of Arafat's responsibility facilitated this amnesia. Korn makes little of Arafat's responsibility for the murders, but he acutely observes: "So Curt Moore and Cleo Noel, who were required to sacrifice their lives in Khartoum to sustain a principle of U.S. policy, found neither an institutional nor a consistent personal advocate at the State Department in Washington, no one whose prime and overriding responsibility it was to ensure that the government of Sudan honored its commitment to bring to justice the eight men who murdered them."

But what about Arafat? His role in the murders of Noel and Moore was not yet entirely forgotten. In early 1986 the possibility of seeking remedies in the criminal justice system was reportedly under consideration by the Justice Department's criminal division. Forty-four Senate members signed off on a February 12 letter urging Attorney General Ed Meese to speed up the investigation. The letter referred to "various State Department cables that may confirm Arafat's role in the murders."

In April 1986, Senator Jeremiah Denton convened a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee for a one-day hearing on the possibility of bringing Arafat to justice for crimes including the murders of Noel and Moore. Criminal Division deputy attorney general Mark Richard testified and provided the Justice Department's verdict on the pursuit of Arafat through the criminal justice system: There was no legal ground for a federal prosecution of Arafat based on his role in the murders, Richard testified. He added somewhat cryptically and almost completely inaccurately: "We enlisted the assis-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tance of the State Department and various components of the intelligence community to obtain and verify Arafat's complicity in the planning of the embassy takeover and the murder of our diplomats. We have analyzed all the materials available and determined that the evidence currently available is plainly insufficient for prosecutive purposes if there were a legal basis for instituting charges against Arafat. . . . Information concerning Arafat's direct involvement in this operation is, at best, hearsay and conjecture. Thus, such information would never be admissible in any trial of Arafat in this country." And that was that.

Arafat was thus "cleared" for his cozy relationship with the Clinton White House. Did the administration's highest officers know whom they were dealing with? I asked Dennis Ross, the Middle East envoy and chief peace negotiator in the administrations of both George H.W. Bush and Clinton, if he was aware of Arafat's responsibility for the 1973 murders of Noel and Moore. "I was aware that State had looked into it, but I didn't know that a conclusion had been reached," he told me. I asked him whether, if in fact the department had determined Arafat's involvement, we should not have dealt with him like a criminal rather than an honored guest. "That's a legitimate question," he responded. "Had it been understood at the highest levels, it should have factored into the decision making. What we would have done had we been fully aware of it after the Israelis made their decision to proceed in dealing with Arafat, I can't say." I asked him what he would say to the average citizen with the perspective that the murderer of American officials shouldn't get a pass. "It's fair to say," he said, "at a minimum, that it's hard to fathom."

When the Bush (I) and Clinton administrations dealt directly with Arafat, did they somehow not know exactly with whom they were dealing? If so, regardless of the failure of institutional memory reflected in Ambassador Ross's comments and the institutional misrepresentations reflected in Richard's testimony, excuses were lacking. In 1990 Neil C. Livingstone and David Halevy had published *Inside the PLO*, devoting a chapter to the murders and quoting extensively from State Department cables received in response to the authors' Freedom of Information Act requests. In 1993, Korn published his equally well-documented volume, though Korn buried the documentation of Arafat's culpability in the book's source notes.

In the summer of 2002 I contacted the State Department for a comment on a draft column addressing the question of Arafat's responsibility for the Khartoum murders. State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs deputy director of press affairs Gregory Sullivan responded: "I can't say I'm impressed with your research or argumentation. You're obviously writing a piece designed to elicit a certain reaction rather than one based on factual accounts or actual comments made by the U.S. government. I really don't have the time to do the research for you, but I do find myself compelled to point out . . . Evidence clearly points to the terrorist group Black September as having committed the assassinations of Amb. Noel and George Moore, and though Black September was a part of the Fatah movement, the linkage between Arafat and this group has never been established."

Given Sullivan's statement, the State Department's posting this past June of the 1973 CIA summary of the Khartoum operation came as a surprise. Sullivan to the contrary notwithstanding, the summary stated that "the Khartoum operation was carried out with the full knowledge and personal approval of Yasser Arafat." (Sullivan did not respond to my request for an interview.)

When I inquired into the posting of the document, I was referred to the State Department's Office of the Historian. Marc Susser is head of the office; Edward Keefer is the general editor of the Foreign Relation series in which the 1973 document was published. Susser and Keefer explained that the document was deemed of interest in the context of American relations with Sudan. They included it for publication in fulfillment of the office's statutory obligation to document American foreign relations, after thirty years, without input from any policymaker at State. They first learned of the document's wider interest beyond the context of American-African relations when they read Caroline Glick's January 2, 2007, *Jerusalem Post* column on the subject.

The publication of the 1973 CIA summary ends 33 years of public silence on Yasser Arafat's murder of two high-ranking State Department officers. It is a notable event. The tortured history of the government's treatment of Arafat's responsibility warrants much additional investigation. And given the fact that Arafat's right hand man is the current prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, it is not *only* of historical interest. Speaking in a 2003 interview from the perspective of an average citizen who was also a firsthand witness to a most significant piece of this tortured history, former NSA analyst Welsh may appropriately be given the last word, at least for the moment: "There are limits to which foreign policy issues should require a man to lower himself. Shaking the hand of a murderer of a U.S. ambassador is such a case. Any peace based upon that hand is a delusion." ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Man for the Plan

Meet General David Petraeus, the new commander in Iraq

By Tom Donnelly

"We need a man, and then a plan." So Field Marshall Bernard Law Montgomery is reported to have said when recommending General Sir Gerald Templer to be British high commissioner at the height of the Malayan insurgency. When, in January 1952, Templer was summoned to meet the prime minister, the British Dominion of Malaya had been under a state of emergency for almost four years. Churchill, newly returned to power and further satiated by a full dinner, waved a glass of brandy and bellowed: "Templer! Malaya!" A few minutes later: "Templer! Full powers!" And finally, "Full power, Templer. Very heady stuff. Use it sparingly."

If Gerald Templer was the face of Britain in Malaya, David Petraeus is now to be the face of America in Iraq: Perhaps as soon as Tuesday, the Senate will confirm Petraeus's promotion to four-star general and he will assume command of "Multi-National Force-Iraq" in Baghdad. But generals, wrote John Keegan in *The Mask of Command*, "may be many things besides the commander of an army." A general may, Keegan continued, "carry both society and army farther than they believed they wished to travel."

Americans are near the point of wishing to travel no farther in Iraq. After tolerating Saddam Hussein's outrages for two decades, we find ourselves four years past his removal with the Iraqi government still unable to govern the country. At home, there is barely enough political will to press forward. Nor is there much belief that the Bush administration can chart the way. Petraeus must be many things, indeed: He must carry Americans and Iraqis alike farther than we think we wish to travel.

Happily, Petraeus, whom I've known and observed for nearly 20 years, wears "the mask of command" as well as any current officer. He's already done so successfully for Iraqis. As commander of the 101st Airborne Division at the time of the invasion, Petraeus quickly found himself effectively the mayor of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, and governor of the surrounding province at a time when the Saddam government had collapsed and the Coalition Provisional Authority barely existed on paper, let alone on the ground in northern Iraq. The Marine battalion that had been the first U.S. unit to enter Mosul was much too small to undertake the necessary tasks. Petraeus immediately threw himself into establishing what was, in effect, an occupation authority and creating a public persona for himself; admirers and skeptics alike called him "Petraeus Pasha" or "King David," though not often to his face. Importantly, he allowed his subordinates an equal latitude. Not every decision made was perfect—there was, alas, no real U.S. occupation policy, and, when Ambassador Paul Bremer set a different course, there were clashes—but Mosul as run by the 101st Airborne remains a tantalizing image of what an intelligent American occupation might have been like.

And Petraeus has successfully worn the mask for American audiences; for all our civil-military fretting about "men on horseback," we seem to like charismatic commanders almost as much as Iraqis do. Not the least of these audiences is the U.S. Army itself. Petraeus long has been marked as ambitious and smart—two qualities both admired and distrusted in the service. When I met him, he was working as the personal aide to then-chief of staff General Carl Vuono. Generals' aides don't necessarily long survive the passing of their sponsor and his posse; the officer corps can be clannish and prone to petty politics and jealousies. Petraeus has been assiduous in matching his reputation as a field soldier with his reputation as an intellect. He not only earned a doctorate from Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School—writing on the effects of the Vietnam war on civil-military relations—but also

Tom Donnelly is resident fellow in defense and national security studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

keeps himself maniacally fit. The speed of his recovery from a gunshot wound received on a rifle range when he was commanding a battalion in the 101st Airborne is legendary. (The wound required a five-hour operation—performed by Dr. Bill Frist.)

Further, Petraeus is coming off a successful tenure as head of the Army's Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth. While this job took a winning commander away from his war at a crucial moment, it has helped Petraeus polish his institutional credentials in a way that will now serve him well. The main efforts during his 15 months in Kansas were the recasting of Army training for counterinsurgency operations and the creation of a new counterinsurgency field manual. The manual has gotten tremendous attention and is now quoted in every profile of Petraeus, but he sagely conceived the new doctrine as process more than product, as dialogue more than decalogue. Petraeus brought in not only a good number of academics and experts, but Marines as well as soldiers. The manual is, importantly, a two-service publication, and Petraeus worked well with Marine Lieutenant General James Mattis—another tremendously successful commander in Iraq, a serious thinker, and a folk hero to Marines. Mattis's message to Iraqis was that they could have "no better friend, no worse enemy" than the Marines. Petraeus will be sending a similar message to Baghdadis.

AFP / Chris Bouroncle

David Petraeus

Petraeus also wears the mask of command in a way that is convincing to the press. *U.S. News & World Report*, as ever determined to understand the universe as a giant top-ten list, named Petraeus one of "America's Best Leaders" in 2005. He was "an open mind for a new Army," the magazine thought. At a funeral for one of his troopers, "he wore the stone face; even in this tragic moment, he exuded calm and control." In 2004, when Petraeus took on the task of training the Iraqis, *Newsweek* likewise saw what it wanted to see: a one-man-way-out from a war that even then establishment journalists were coming to dislike. "General Petraeus," *Newsweek* concluded, "is the closest thing to an exit strategy the United States now has." Michael R. Gordon of the *New York Times*, a deeply experienced military correspondent and author of one of the best books on Iraq, *Cobra II*, puts it more soberly: "I think [Petraeus] is going in to supervise and really energize and drive this new strategy in Baghdad."

And Petraeus gets rave reviews from Congress. From his time in Mosul to his stint beginning the serious training of the Iraqi army, Petraeus played host to members of Congress traveling to Iraq. Representative Ike Skelton, the Missouri Democrat who now heads the House Armed Services Committee and who, despite his recent opposition to Bush administration Iraq policy, remains highly regarded for his bipartisanship and his military expertise, declared Petraeus "a first-class leader," adding, "If anyone can help motivate the Iraqis into taking on more security responsibility and well lead American forces in Iraq, it is he." One of the few dissenting notes came from Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, who last week petulantly told a group of San Francisco-area journalists: "He has been in charge of training, unsuccessfully." The Petraeus nomination confounds the Democrats' argument that "the generals" oppose the surge of forces into Baghdad.

In striving to reenergize American strategy in Iraq, Petraeus, for all his virtues, could use more help as he carries us forward; the plan matters, too. The administration has spent the last two weeks issuing caveats and otherwise undercutting the seemingly strong plan set forth by President Bush in his January 10 speech. And indeed, not even that plan vested Petraeus with the "full powers" that Templer had in Malaya; U.S. efforts, both in Iraq and Afghanistan, have never achieved unity of command. There have been occasional moments of unity of effort, but those have been happy coincidences

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when personalities have meshed: Envoy and ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad worked well first with Lieutenant General David Barno in Afghanistan and recently with General George Casey in Iraq. When the chemistry was bad, as it was between Bremer and Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, the division of authority was a crippling problem. There's no reason to think Petraeus won't get along with the new U.S. ambassador in Baghdad, Ryan Crocker, but neither is it a sure thing, and—most important—there's no good reason to leave it to chance.

Nor is it clear that any other agencies of the U.S. government are prepared to surge in support of the military. There has been a lot of talk in recent years about the need to mobilize "all elements of national power," but the State Department and others have been slow off the mark. The ability of the Iraqi government to run its own reconstruction program, despite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's promise of a $10 billion effort, is even more doubtful than its ability to secure the streets of Baghdad. The military has stepped into the reconstruction vacuum in both Iraq and Afghanistan, but the White House needs to assert itself across the entire government as it has at last done at the Defense Department. U.S. forces will certainly clear and hold the crucial neighborhoods of Baghdad, but it's essential that this lead quickly to the "build" phase of the Bush strategy.

A third challenge is the administration's insistent line that "the Iraqis are in the lead." This is a fiction meant for Iraqi and American domestic political consumption, but it is so transparent that it is counterproductive: If the Iraqis had been able to take the lead, there would never have been a need for a surge in American forces; if the Maliki government were able to control Baghdad, there wouldn't be a "Mahdi Army." It's also a fiction that plays directly into the hands of the congressional opponents of the surge. While the Democratic leaders have yet to summon the courage to cut off funding, they'll now likely tie as much as they can to measures of Iraqi participation and progress, which the president will be asked to "certify"—that is, lie about. Most significantly, this will obscure the fact that Petraeus will be, and needs to be, the Big Man in Baghdad, the leader of the most powerful militia of all.

There has long been a recognition that reconstruction efforts must have an "Iraqi face"; building the credibility of the legitimate local government is a central element of a successful counterinsurgency. But there is likewise a clear distinction between what soldiers and Marines call "hugging" Iraqi authorities—setting them up for success in a cocoon of American power—and pushing them prematurely out front, setting them up for failure. Establishing security in Baghdad, which can only be done with Americans in the lead, would be the biggest boost for Maliki and for the Iraqi government more generally.

Yet the most important challenge is to ensure that the military aspects of the plan are correct. Petraeus is being asked to carry out a plan formulated, debated, and all but finalized before he was nominated. He needs the authority and flexibility to execute it, modify it, or scrap it entirely as he sees fit. The president promised in his speech that five full brigades would be available for duty in Baghdad, but Pentagon briefers and, astoundingly, officials from other agencies have been saying otherwise over the past week, particularly on Capitol Hill. Where the truth rests is difficult to tell, but it is now buried under a pile of contradictory information about force flow, force posture, dates of deployment, and so forth. New defense secretary Robert Gates stumbled this past week when he started talking about a possible drawdown of U.S. forces this fall in Iraq. And the long overdue agreement on expanding the size of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps was foolishly hyped by double-counting soldiers already added during the Rumsfeld years.

Whether fairly or not, the administration's nomination of General Casey as Army chief of staff further complicates matters. It invites a comparison to General William Westmoreland and Vietnam—and there's nothing less helpful to Iraq policy than Vietnam analogies. Last week, some in the administration talked about linking the Petraeus and Casey nominations in a way that would do Casey no favors but Petraeus and the Iraq mission much harm. The hearing to confirm Casey as Army chief has been pushed back until after Petraeus's hearing, and the two have been de-linked. Nevertheless, Democrats will still seize on the Casey hearing as an opportunity to attack the administration's conduct of the war. Whatever Casey's strengths or shortcomings, this is likely to prove a shabby reward for a soldier who has served long and honorably, and a potentially crippling blow for an incoming service chief who, in addition to supplying Petraeus as theater commander with the resources he needs, must undertake the expansion and reconstruction of the Army.

Still, at the end of the day, Petraeus will be in charge of fighting the war. In war—especially in irregular warfare—a good man can overcome obstacles. In 1952, Sir Gerald Templer quickly concluded, "I could win this war in three months if I could get two-thirds of the people on my side." By December, *Time* magazine had made "Smiling Tiger" Templer its cover boy—with a front-page portrait that was the ultimate "mask of command"—concluding that it was the "measure of Gerald Templer's success that in less than one year he has been able to turn from quick skirmishes against disaster to slow battles for Malaya's future." Something similar in Iraq would be a measure of David Petraeus's success, and a road to victory for the United States. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Foto Marburg / Art Resource, NY

'Plato's Symposium' (1869) by Anselm Feuerbach

The Forgotten Virtue

How Plato perceived the importance of courage BY HARVEY MANSFIELD

Courage is a very common virtue, its presence observed by all, even by children, and its absence sometimes severely blamed, more often excused with disdain. Your reputation will suffer a good deal if you are seen to be a coward. Nor can you take refuge in the relativism of values that, in other matters, is such a feature in the thinking of our times. You will probably not be able to defend yourself from an accusation by claiming that one person's courage is another's cowardice. We do not believe there is great difficulty in defining it. Though some societies are peaceable, others warlike, all seem to prize courage and despise cowardice.

Yet courage is very little studied. However much we praise it, however easily we define it, we today are not sure that we altogether approve of it. Our individualism prizes the self, but courage deliberately endangers the self for the sake of—what? It seems that the answer would have to be that we value something more than our selves, more than our principle of individualism, and this would be uncomfortable to confront. So we let the anomaly of courage, a virtue much noticed in life and little valued in theory, pass without comment.

Contemporary theorists of liberal democracy chicken out completely, for even when it is their declared business to consider liberal virtues, they do not consider this one. Whether we think of gain in the terms of economics, or of esteem in the language of psychology, the self is a kind of deity and our theorists are its theologians. They seem to be afraid of courage.

Plato and the Virtue of Courage
by Linda R. Rabieh
Johns Hopkins, 224 pp., $45

Linda Rabieh's fine new book on courage in Plato begins from current neglect by theorists. They "seem to have placed old-fashioned, traditional courage in a closet, trusting that it's there, ready to be hauled out in case of emergency, but otherwise neglecting it." Exceptions to this attitude are feminists who criticize courage as unhealthy, inhumane, and over-manly; but they are inhibited by their wish to claim courage for women and perhaps for themselves, as well as by their need to avoid giving the impression that women are fit only, or at all, for motherhood.

These feminists join liberal theorists as disparate as Hobbes and Kant in preaching the advantages of cooperation. If liberal society is to focus on the self, its main anxiety has to be the exaggeration of the self when in conflict with other selves. The enemy is testy pride nourished by courage, and the solution is toleration in the active and positive sense of "civic engagement." Liberals who deplore the trend toward "bowling alone" never think of overcoming the lack with martial virtue, such as courage seems to be.

Rabieh kindly takes liberal theorists by the hand and leads them to Plato, who had much to say about courage. Plato discusses it, or lets it be discussed, in two dialogues especially,

Harvey Mansfield is professor of government at Harvard University and the author, most recently, of Manliness.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Getty Images / Hulton Archive

'What have they got that I ain't got?'

Laches and the *Republic*. In the *Laches*, Socrates examines the views of two Athenian generals, Laches and Nicias, who ought surely to know something about courage. But they flounder grievously in trying to explain themselves to Socrates, and the dialogue ends without resolving on an agreed definition.

In the *Republic*, a more positive doctrine emerges because courage is considered in company with, or as a consequence of, justice, a virtue we demand as well as admire. We need courage, and a definition of courage, in order to defend justice. But then it turns out that there is a higher form of courage, philosophical courage, which overshadows the ordinary courage—steadfastness in the face of risk—that we all can recognize. For the philosopher needs courage when he takes the life-long risk of questioning opinions, both society's and his own.

Linda Rabieh finds nothing peculiarly Greek about Plato's thoughts on courage that make them inaccessible to us. We today could easily find, from making a survey in the street, two problems in courage that Plato uncovers. (Our liberal theorists could find them too, if they desired.)

First, it is very clear that one can admire the courage of one who fights in a bad cause, for example a courageous Nazi soldier. This implies that courage is separable from its end, is an end in itself. But does it make sense to admire the courage that acts on behalf of an injustice that one must abhor? Virtue may be divided into virtues, but it also seems to have a unity so that the virtues work together, especially courage and justice. Even the liberal theorists, when they speak of a single "self," presuppose such a unity however much they wish to stress the plurality of human inclinations.

A second problem is that courage does not seem to be in one's interest. Courage responds to danger and calls for sacrifice, particularly in battle. Being courageous can get you killed—hardly in your interest, one might think. And even if it is not in your interest to live a coward's existence, courage needs guidance from prudence to know when it is reasonable to make this sacrifice. It is noble to face risk, but must the risk not be worthwhile, requiring an exercise of prudence to see when to attack, when to retreat? But courage and prudence seem to be at odds: The one warm, enthusiastic, and oblivious to danger, the other cool, calculating, and watchful.

Today in Iraq, American soldiers are risking their lives to save our lives at home. But our way of life puts peace, security, and survival ahead of conflict and danger. Thus it seems that the nobility of our soldiers is compromised because it is put in the service of mundane living for the folks back home—which is just what our soldiers gave up. Yet if we try to escape this incoherence by reminding ourselves that our way of life includes sacrifice for our way of life, then it seems we are sacrificing for the sake of sacrifice, endlessly.

This is but a sample of Rabieh's reasoning. Her book is not a line-by-line commentary on Plato's texts, but it does follow all the ins and outs of his arguments. If you want to learn about courage, or if you merely want to be impressed with what it takes to learn about courage, or to read Plato, this is the place to go. The toughness of courage is treated: The toughness to reject false hopes and to accept that certain evils are unavoidable. And also the magnificence of courage: the beauty of self-fulfillment that is greater than the nobility of self-denial or self-sacrifice. For self-sacrifice is in your interest if it makes you better. The paradox of sacrifice—for its own sake yet somehow for your own sake—is the theme of this excellent study.

Rabieh deals justly and generously with her fellow scholars of Plato. She is modestly, but still bravely, critical of those who take a historical or developmental view of Plato, and who would see the two dialogues—the *Laches* negative or aporetic (ending with doubt rather than a conclusion) and the *Republic* more definite—as stages in Plato's career as he understood things better or differently. Rabieh sees the dialogues as presenting different aspects meant to be understood as complementary. In her view, Plato is still relevant today—indeed needed—and all the more because we are so chary of courage.

Like us, Plato was opposed to the societies of his time, including Sparta, who put too much trust in courage and welcomed war. But unlike us, he confronted courage as a problem because, despite its dangers, he admired the toughness of soul on which it rests. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Broken Promise

How the vision of the civil rights era was lost.

BY ROGER CLEGG

Last May, Shelby Steele was presented the Bradley Prize for his outstanding achievements as a scholar and writer, and he greatly deserved it. As an English professor and, now, as a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Steele has written innumerable articles and an indispensable trilogy of books about the psychology of modern American race relations: *The Content of Our Character* (1990), *A Dream Deferred* (1998), and now *White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era*.

Shelby Steele

Getty Images

White Guilt
How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era
by Shelby Steele
HarperCollins, 192 pp., $24.95

White Guilt is presented as Steele's interior monologue—his internal "Chautauqua, a kind of narrative lecture through a subject or dilemma"—about race as he drives from Los Angeles to Monterey with, as an unlikely backdrop, the car radio's reports on the developing Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Not so unlikely, actually, as it is this angle on the scandal that prompts Steele's reverie: President Eisenhower, he dimly recalls, was rumored to have, from time to time, used the n-word on the golf course. If Clinton had done that, his presidency would have ended; if Eisenhower had been caught having sex with a White House intern, *he* would have been toast. So what accounts for the change in American mores between the 1950s and the 1990s, such that a hanging offense in one era became mere peccadillo in the other, and vice versa?

This, then, is an essay, very light on statistics and social science, with no index and lots of personal anecdotes and Jamesian psychology.

But it is no less valuable for that. To the contrary: As the empirical evidence continues to mount that liberal civil-rights policies are not just unproductive but counterproductive, one concludes that the reason for the left's stubborn insistence that they be left in place has to be rooted in something other than external reality.

Steele's basic point is this: White Americans were quite right in the 1960s to admit the error of their racist ways, but this acknowledgment resulted in a general loss of moral authority and an overwhelming sense of guilt. To regain moral authority and assuage this guilt, it was necessary to "dissociate" from the racist past, and the obvious way to do this was to support social programs that were ostentatiously remedial in purpose: the Great Society, affirmative action, corporate celebration of diversity, and the like.

This turned out to be a bad bargain for African Americans. The programs were practical failures, of course. And, worse, they implicitly required blacks to cede personal responsibility for their futures to liberal whites, to be abjectly grateful for the programs—Steele skewers Maureen Dowd's column that berated Clarence Thomas on his lack of proper "gratitude" for affirmative action—and to accept the premise that African Americans cannot and should not be held to the same intellectual and moral standards as whites: "They are assigned an inferiority so intractable that nothing overcomes it. . . . [But] black rage is always a kind of opportunism," and, indeed, "failing the litmus test of militancy incurred the Uncle Tom stigma." So the deal was struck and has stuck ever since.

The underlying psychology has practical ramifications. Thus, one might unthinkingly assume, as I had, that the sacrifice of quality to quotas would be painful and grudging. But the fact that decisions are made on a nonmeritocratic basis is a *good* thing if you are trying to assuage guilt: The more you discriminate—the more unjust you are to some in favoring others—the more you burnish your do-gooder credentials.

It is interesting that this is the second major book this past year in which an African-American intellectual concludes that policies hatched by sixties liberals and radicals have had unintended and deadly consequences for his race. The other is *Winning the Race* by John McWhorter (reviewed here last March).

The loss of moral authority as a result of acknowledged racism had concurrent results in other areas, too. American elites became timid in foreign affairs (our past is not only racist but imperialist), apologetic about capitalism (we are racists, imperialists, *and* environmental rapists), and adamantly nonjudgmental about sex, drugs, and illegitimacy (who are we to criticize anyone?). It became unchic to believe, as Steele does, that "the West [is] a great civilization" and, specifically, that "America—for all its transgressions—is also indisputably great." For baby boomers like Bill Clinton, then, sexual

Roger Clegg is president of the Center for Equal Opportunity.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

immorality was no big deal, but political incorrectness on race would be unthinkable.

Steele does not predict how long this mindset will stay with us, but there is reason for hoping that it is already and rapidly fading. As Steele writes, "It must be acknowledged that blacks are no longer oppressed in America." Their principal hurdles, rather, are self-imposed. In particular, a "70 percent illegitimacy rate among all blacks (90 percent in certain inner cities) pretty much makes the point that there is a responsibility problem." This is sinking in, and more African Americans are having their "Cosby moments," as Steele calls them.

White attitudes are, one hopes, changing, too. Forty years ago, it might have been difficult for white people to acknowledge the ugliness of racial discrimination without also feeling guilty about it. But with every tick of the clock, this difficulty diminishes. Meanwhile, prejudice has become so socially unacceptable and universally uncool that there is less urgency in making a big display of one's lack of racism—everyone is assumed to oppose hunger, cancer, and bigotry.

"In fact, most of today's conservatives sound like Martin Luther King in 1963," writes Steele. Still, the struggle is far from resolved. And, as it continues, we are lucky to have Shelby Steele in it. ♦

Minds Matter

A novelist explores the territory of the brain.

BY JOHN WILSON

Richard Powers

AP / Stuart Ramson

Late on a freezing February night, a man in his late twenties rolls his truck on an "arrow-straight country road" outside Kearney, Nebraska. His sister, several hours away, gets a call from the hospital and arrives not long after dawn. Considering the severity of the accident, her brother—though badly battered—is exceptionally fortunate, his condition stable. But when she returns to the hospital later in the day, after getting some sleep, her brother's condition has inexplicably worsened, dramatically so. Next to his bed she finds a cryptic note scrawled in a "spidery" hand:

The Echo Maker
by Richard Powers
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 464 pp., $25

John Wilson is the editor of Books & Culture.

I am No One
but tonight on North Line Road
GOD led me to you
so You could Live
and bring back someone else.

Karin, the sister, tries unsuccessfully to find out who left the note, but soon a more grotesque enigma preoccupies her. When Mark, her brain-injured brother, comes out of his coma, he claims that she is an imposter, not really his sister, and no matter how much she protests and pleads with him, no matter what tidbits of obscure family lore she dredges up, he is unswerving.

Such is the premise of *The Echo Maker*, winner of the National Book Award. With an epigraph from A.R. Luria, the legendary Soviet neuroscientist, and a leading character clearly inspired by Oliver Sacks, Powers's book is, in part, the most impressive attempt to date to take the mind-boggling findings of contemporary brain science and flesh them out. Mark's delusion about his sister turns out to be an instance of Capgras syndrome, an affliction rare enough to lure neuroscientist and bestselling writer Gerald Weber—whose latest book is just appearing—from New York to the Great Plains. And what Powers suggests is that such freakish disorders are not so far removed as we suppose from the ordinary business of consciousness. Mark Schluter, desperately improvising conspiracy theories, is making up a self on the fly, as we all do.

How this cashes out for Richard Powers I'm not entirely sure. If he is intending to argue that the continuity of the self is finally an illusion, the way that various savants these days are telling us that free will is an illusion conjured by evolution for its own purposes, consciousness itself an expedient illusion to mask the unruly modular machinery that does the real work—if this is the point, let us dissent. But if he intends, simultaneously, to affirm the mysterious continuity of the self while pressing us to see how that self is never static, never achieved once and for all, then he's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prodding us helpfully, as Hugh Kenner did when he said that there is no such thing as "plain English," that reading an ordinary sentence is more or less as demanding as reading a line from *Finnegans Wake*. (We're simply unaware of most of the routine decoding.)

The Echo Maker brilliantly shows various minds in the act of making sense or suddenly losing the seemingly effortless art of perception and understanding—so persuasively, in fact, that the book should perhaps come with a warning sticker, explaining that you may look up from reading and fail to recognize, for a moment, the dearly familiar face across from you, or find yourself in what seems to be an utterly strange place. "If these symptoms persist, call your neurologist."

For most writers this would be enough—more than enough—to fuel a novel, especially given the moral complexity of Gerald Weber, who comes to feel that he has exploited the subjects of his books, and the tangled histories of Karin and Mark and those close to them. But Powers has more on his mind. Mark's accident occurs during the annual migratory visit of the sandhill cranes, who descend en masse on the Platte River and tarry there for a few weeks en route to northern climes. The river is threatened by development, meaning that the cranes are in jeopardy, too.

I hear you groaning, Dear Reader. You are already weary of the latest vogue in fictional villainy, which brings us a seemingly endless succession of interchangeable despoilers, guilty of crimes against Nature. Don't be so hasty to conclude that Powers would merely irritate you. There's nothing facile in his sense of the human plight, and the cranes point beyond themselves.

"One of the Anishinaabe clans was named the Cranes—*Ajijak* or *Businasee*—the Echo Makers," Powers writes:

> When animals and people all spoke the same language, crane calls said exactly what they meant. Now we live in unclear echoes. The turtle-dove, swallow, and crane keep the time of their coming, says Jeremiah. Only people fail to recall the order of the Lord.

So there has been a Fall. (Any arguments with that?) Is there redemption? Certainly not. Powers seems at pains to emphasize that what we have in mind is the crabbed fundamentalist faith of Karin and Mark's mother. But the enigmatic note that Karin finds at her brother's bedside hints that there is yet reason for hope. Where did it come from? That's a puzzle entwined with another, sufficient to keep the reader turning the pages to the very end, when all is revealed. At which point you may very well want to go back to page one and start rereading. ♦

What Do They Know?

Reclaiming the K-12 canon from John Dewey.

BY M.D. AESCHLIMAN

"The effect of John Dewey's philosophy on the design of curricular systems was devastating," Richard Hofstadter wrote nearly 50 years ago in *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. The disastrous effects of the progressive educational ideology on our K-12 public school system have become even more pervasive and entrenched since Hofstadter wrote those words. Yet government reports such as *A Nation at Risk* (1983) and comparative international surveys of American educational incompetence have elicited healthy responses and a growing, bipartisan movement of educational reform at the local, state, and federal levels.

The Knowledge Deficit
Closing the Shocking Education Gap for American Children
by E.D. Hirsch Jr.
Houghton Mifflin, 192 pp., $22

Despite difficulties, defects, and even dangers, the No Child Left Behind Act is the most important national, top-down, federal educational initiative since the civil rights legislation of the 1960s that destroyed *de jure* segregation. Its indispensable testing provisions give us descriptive and diagnostic pictures of state and district educational performance without which real accountability, remediation, and repair are simply impossible.

Along with the top-down national effort, and earlier and continuing state initiatives, there have been complementary, bottom-up, grassroots educational reform initiatives of great promise. In *The Knowledge Deficit*, E.D. Hirsch highlights the most important and valuable of these efforts when he commends "the heroes of the systematic phonics movement, who through their efforts have now brought effective teaching" of literacy into many schools. Charter schools, new or revived religious schools, and voucher programs are other local, state, or private initiatives that have begun to bring beneficial change to a public school system that Hirsch describes, without exaggeration, as "the most chaotic and unfair in the world"—and also one of the least effective.

Among these beneficial educational initiatives, arguably the most important has been pioneered by Hirsch himself, both in a series of books over the last 20 years and in his intellectual and inspirational leadership and collaboration in the formation of the Core

M.D. Aeschliman, professor of education at Boston University, is the author, most recently, of The Restitution of Man: C.S. Lewis and the Case Against Scientism.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bettmann / Corbis

Knowledge curriculum over the last 15 years. This elementary curriculum is now in use in over 800 elementary schools in the United States and abroad, with increasingly favorable evidence of its capacity to deliver a good basic education to all sorts and conditions of children, to elicit their engagement, and to help teachers coordinate their own efforts within grade levels and in a coherent scope and sequence of courses—a real, specific curriculum—over the elementary grades.

In Hofstadter's patient, but very damning, indictment of the experimental anti-intellectualism of Dewey and his disciples, he asserted against them the obvious, Aristotelian truth that some "part of the adult community must have convictions about the curriculum and be willing to organize it accordingly." Beginning in 1990, three years after the publication of his *Cultural Literacy*, this is precisely what Hirsch, some University of Virginia colleagues, and "145 people from every region, scholarly discipline, and racial and ethnic group" in the United States did. For the fantasy that most Americans believe, and that must be dispelled to make real progress, is that there exists a coherent K-8 curriculum in the United States. Eighty years of progressive experimentation, "policy churn," euphemistic and pretentious rhetorical pyrotechnics, individualized teacher units, and an isolating teacher "autonomy" have left our elementary system with a curricular chaos that ultimately demoralizes teachers and students alike.

"So-called low teacher quality," Hirsch judiciously writes, "is not an innate characteristic of American teachers." Rather, "it is the consequence of the training they have received and of the vague, incoherent curricula they are given to teach," and these factors are themselves the legacy of the progressive tradition of Dewey that has been institutionalized in most teachers' colleges and education schools. Like Renaissance Latin, its potency is largely rhetorical: Who could be educated without Latin? Who could be a teacher without being progressive?

Often labeled a neoconservative by his left-wing critics, Hirsch is, rather, an outstanding example of what the educational policy specialist Charles L. Glenn calls "the radical middle." He is keen and dogged in resisting what he calls the "premature polarization" of public educational issues along political lines. Here he praises Ruth Wattenberg, "the brave editor of the *American Educator*, published by the American Federation of Teachers," for openly advocating "that the states should agree on specific core content in all subjects in the early grades." And Hirsch's emphasis on "specific, cumulative content" in the curriculum is based not on a narrow political agenda but on research into what works in elementary teaching and learning, on what students need to know, and on an unostentatious, steady, sturdy devotion to the promise of American life and institutions, a devotion that can best be described as civic courage.

Like earlier critics of the theory and practice of educational progressivism, such as Irving Babbitt, W.C. Bagley, I.L. Kandel, Arthur Bestor, and Russell Kirk, and contemporaries such as William Kirk Kilpatrick, Diane Ravitch, Charles Glenn, and John Silber, Hirsch is ultimately antagonistic to the seductions of what he calls the ideology of Romanticism, with its flattering and "complacent faith in the benefits of nature" and its hostility to "artificial," traditional literacy, history, rationality, and culture itself.

His opposition has taken the form not only of a detailed, sustained critique of Romantic-progressive ideas, but of engagement and democratic collaboration in an effective civic initiative that will outlive him. It is an initiative that is beneficially affecting the lives of thousands of American children. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kid Turns 70

And nobody cares.

BY JOSEPH EPSTEIN

Seventy. Odd thing to happen to a five-year-old boy who, only the other day, sang "Any Bonds Today," whose mother's friends said he would be a heartbreaker for sure (he wasn't), who was popular but otherwise undistinguished in high school, who went on to the University of Chicago but long ago forgot the dates of the rule of the Thirty Tyrants in Athens and the eight reasons for the Renaissance, who has married twice and written several books, who somewhere along the way became the grandfather of three, life is but a dream, sha-boom sha-boom, 70, me, go on, whaddya, kiddin' me?

A funny age to turn, 70, and despite misgivings I have gone ahead and done it, yet with more complex thoughts than any previous birthday has brought. Birthdays have never been particularly grand events for me; my own neither please nor alarm me. I note them chiefly with gratitude for having got through another year. I have never been in any way part of the cult of youth, delighted to be taken for younger than I am, or proud that I can do lots of physical things that men my age are no longer supposed to be able to do: 26 chin-ups with gila monsters biting both my ankles. I have always thought I looked—and, as mothers used to instruct, always tried to act—my age. But now, with 70 having arrived, I notice that for the first time I am beginning to fudge, to hedge, to fib slightly, about my age. In conversation, in public appearances, I described myself as "in my late 60s," hoping, I suppose, to be taken for 67. To admit to 70 is to put oneself into a different category: to seem uncomfortably close to, not to put too fine a point on it, Old Age.

At 70 middle age is definitely—and definitively—done. A wonderful period, middle age, so nondescript and imprecise, extending perhaps from one's late 30s to one's late 60s, it allows a person to think him- or herself simultaneously still youthful, though no longer a kid. Forty-eight, 57, 61, those middle-aged numbers suggest miles to go before one sleeps, miles filled with potential accomplishments, happy turnabouts in one's destiny, midlife crises (if one's tastes run to such extravaganzas), surprises of all kinds.

Many ski lifts at Vail and Aspen, I have been told, no longer allow senior-citizen discounts at 60, now that so many people continue skiing well into their 60s. With increased longevity, it's now thought a touch disappointing if a person dies before 85. Sixty, the style sections of the newspapers inform us, is the new 40. Perhaps. But 70—70, to ring a change on the punchline of the joke about the difference between a virgin and a German Jew—70 remains 70. One can look young for 70, one can be fit for 70, but in the end there one is, 70.

W.H. Auden, who pegged out at 66, said that while praying we ought quickly to get over the begging part and get on to the gratitude part. "Let all your thinks," he wrote, "be thanks." One can either look upon life as a gift or as a burden, and I myself happen to be a gift man. I didn't ask to be born, true enough; but really, how disappointing not to have been. I had the additional good luck of arriving in 1937, in what was soon to become the most interesting country in the world and to have lived through a time of largely unrelieved prosperity in which my particular generation danced between the raindrops of wars: a child during World War II, too young for Korea, too old for Vietnam, but old enough for the draft, which sent me for 22 months (useful as they now in retrospect seem) off to Missouri, Texas, and Arkansas. My thinks really are chiefly thanks.

As for my decay, what the French call my *décomposition géneralé*, it proceeds roughly on schedule, yet for the moment at a less than alarming rate. I have had a heart bypass operation. Five or so years ago, I was found to have auto-immune hepatitis, which caused me no pain, and which side-effectless drugs have long since put in remission. I am paunchless, have a respectable if not abundant amount of hair atop my head (most of it now gray, some of it turning white), retain most of my teeth (with the aid of expensive dentistry). I have so far steered clear of heart attack, dodged the altogether too various menacing cancers whirling about, and missed the wretched roll of the dice known as aneurysms. (Pause while I touch wood.) My memory for unimportant things has begun to fade, with results that thus far have been no more than mildly inconvenient. (I set aside 10 minutes or so a day to find my glasses and fountain pen.)

I have not yet acquired one of those funny walks—variants of the prostate shuffle, as I think of them—common to men in their late 60s and 70s. I am, though, due for cataract surgery. I'm beginning to find it difficult to hear women with high-pitched voices, especially in restaurants and other noisy places. And I take a sufficient number of pills—anti-this and supplement-that—to have made it necessary to acquire one of those plastic by-the-day-of-the-week pill sorters.

Suddenly, I find myself worrying in a way I never used to do about things out of the routine in my life: having to traverse major freeways and tollways to get to a speaking or social engagement. I take fewer chances, both as a driver and once intrepid jaywalker. I find myself sometimes stumbling over small bumps in the sidewalk, and in recent years have taken a couple of falls, where

Joseph Epstein, a contributing editor to THE WEEKLY STANDARD, *is author most recently of* Alexis de Tocqueville: Democracy's Guide.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

once I would do an *entrechat* and a simple *pirouette*—a Nureyev of the pavement—and move along smartly. I walk more slowly up and down stairs, gripping the railing going downstairs. I have, in sum, become more cautious, begun to feel, physically, more fragile, a bit vulnerable.

Sleep has become erratic. Someone not long ago asked me if I watched *Charlie Rose*, to which I replied that I am usually getting up for the first time when *Charlie Rose* goes on the air. I fall off to sleep readily enough, but two or three hours later I usually wake, often to invent impressively labyrinthine anxieties for myself to dwell upon for an hour or two before falling back into aesthetically unsatisfying dreams until six or so in the morning. Very little distinction in this, I have discovered by talking to contemporaries, especially men, who all seem to sleep poorly. But this little Iliad of woes is pretty much par for the course, if such a cliché metaphor may be permitted from a nongolfer. That I have arrived at 70 without ever having golfed is one of the facts of my biography to date of which I am most proud.

"Bodily decrepitude," says Yeats, "is wisdom." I seem to have accrued more of the former than the latter. Of wisdom generally, I haven't all that much to declare. I find myself more impressed by the mysteries of life and more certain that most of the interesting questions it poses have no persuasive answers, or at least none likely to arrive before I depart the planet. I haven't even settled the question of whether I believe in God. I try to act as if God exists—that is, the prospects of guilt and shame and the moral endorphins that good conduct brings still motivate me to act as decently as I'm able. I suffer, then, some of the fear of religion without any of the enjoyment of the hope it brings. I don't, meanwhile, have a clue about why there is suffering in the world, whether there is an afterlife, or how to explain acts of truly grand altruism or unprofitable evil. You live and you learn, the proverb has it; but in my case, You live and you yearn seems closer to it.

But then, I must report that at 70 even my yearnings are well down. I have no interest in acquiring power of any kind and fame beyond such as I now pathetically possess holds little interest for me. My writing has won no big prizes, nor do I expect it ever to do so. ("Tell them," the normally gentle and genteel 90-year-old William Maxwell said to Alec Wilkinson and another friend on the day before his death, "their f—ing honors mean nothing to me.") I am ready to settle for being known as a good writer by thoughtful people.

I would like to have enough money so that I don't have to worry, or even think, about money, but it begins to look as if I shan't achieve this, either. Rousseau spoke of feeling himself "delivered from the anxiety of hope, certain of gradually losing the anxiety of desire . . . " I've not yet lost all my desire, and suspect that to do so probably is a sign of resigning from life. Although I'm not keen on the idea of oblivion, which seems the most likely of the prospects that await, I like to think that I have become a bit less fearful of death. One of the most efficient ways to decrease this fear, I've found, is to welcome death, at least a little, and this growing older can cause one to do—or at least it has me, sometimes.

Seventy poses the problem of how to live out one's days. To reach 70 and not recognize that one is no longer living (as if one ever were) on an unlimited temporal budget is beyond allowable stupidity. The first unanswerable question at 70 is how many days, roughly, are left in what one does best to think of as one's reprieve. Unless one is under the sentence of a terminal cancer or another wasting disease, no one can know, of course; but I like the notion of the French philosopher Alain that, no matter what age one is, one should look forward to living for another decade, but no more. My mother lived to 82 and my father to 91, so I'm playing, I suppose, with decent genetic cards. Yet I do not count on them. A year or so ago, my dentist told me that I would have to spend a few thousand dollars to replace some dental work, and I told him that I would get back to him on this once I had the results of a forthcoming physical. If I had been found to have cancer, I thought, at least I could let the dentistry, even the flossing, go. Turning 70 one has such thoughts.

At 70 one encounters the standard physical diminutions. I am less than certain how old I actually look, but in a checkout line, I can now say to a young woman, "You have beautiful eyes," without her thinking I'm hitting on her. If my dashing youthful looks are gone, my intellectual and cultural stamina are also beginning to deplete. I have lost most of my interest in travel, and feel, as did Philip Larkin, that I should very much like to visit China, but only on the condition that I could return home that night.

Another diminution I begin to notice is in the realm of tact. I have less of it. I feel readier than ever before to express my perturbation, impatience, boredom. Why, with less time remaining, hold back? "I wonder," I find myself wanting to say to a fairly large number of people, "if you haven't greatly overestimated your charm?" Perhaps, though, I do better to hold off on this until I reach 80, as I hope to be able to do; it will give me something to live for.

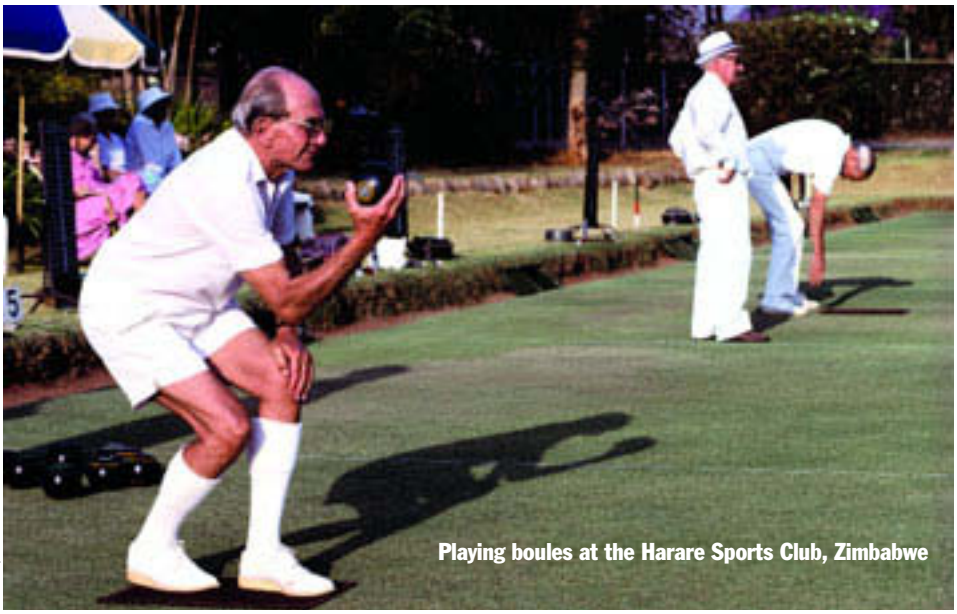
A younger friend in California writes to me that, in a restaurant in Bel Air, Robin Williams, Emma Thompson, and Pete Townsend (of The Who, he is courteous enough to explain) walked by his table. I write back to tell him that I would have been much more impressed if Fred Astaire, Ingrid Bergman, and Igor Stravinsky had done so. My longing to meet Robin Williams, Emma Thompson, and Pete Townsend is roughly the same, I should guess, as their longing to meet me.

I don't much mind being mildly out of it, just as I don't finally mind growing older. George Santayana, perhaps the most detached man the world has known outside of certain Trappist monasteries, claimed to prefer old age to all others. "I heartily agree that old age is, or may be as in my case, far happier than youth," he wrote to his contemporary William Lyon Phelps. "I was never more entertained or less troubled than I am now." Something to this, if one isn't filled with regret for the years

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that have gone before, and I am not, having had a very lucky run thus far in my life. At 70 it is natural to begin to view the world from the sidelines, a glass of wine in hand, watching younger people do the dances of ambition, competition, lust, and the rest of it.

Schopenhauer holds that the chief element in old age is disillusionment. According to this dourest of all philosophers, at 70 we have, if we are at all sentient, realized "that there is very little behind most of the things desired and most of the pleasures hoped for; and we have gradually gained an insight into the great poverty and hollowness of our whole existence. Only when we are seventy do we thoroughly understand the first verse of Ecclesiastes." And yet, even for those of us who like to think ourselves close to illusionless, happiness keeps breaking through, fresh illusions arrive to replace defunct ones, and the game goes on.


Corbis / Gideon Mendel

Playing boules at the Harare Sports Club, Zimbabwe

If the game is to be decently played, at 70 one must harken back as little as possible to the (inevitably golden) days of one's youth, no matter how truly golden they may seem. The temptation to do so, and with some regularity, sets in sometime in one's 60s. As a first symptom, one discovers the word "nowadays" turning up in lots of one's sentences, always with the assumption that nowadays are vastly inferior to *thenadays*, when one was young and the world green and beautiful. Ah, thenadays—so close to "them were the days"—when there was no crime, divorce was unheard of, people knew how to spell, everyone had good handwriting, propriety and decorum ruled, and so on and on into the long boring night of nostalgia.

Start talking about thenadays and one soon finds one's intellectual motor has shifted into full crank, with everything about nowadays dreary, third-rate, and decline-and-fallish. A big mistake. The reason old people think that the world is going to hell, Santayana says, is they believe that, without them in it, which will soon enough be the case, how good really can it be?

Seventy brings prominently to the fore the question of Big D, and I don't mean Dallas. From 70 on, one's death can no longer be viewed as a surprise; a disappointment, yes, but not a surprise. Three score and ten, after all, is the number of years of life set out in the Bible; anything beyond that is, or ought to be, considered gravy, which is likely to be high in cholesterol, so be careful. Henry James, on his deathbed, in a delirium, said of death, "So here it is at last, the distinguished thing." Wonder why? Few things are less distinguished than death, that most democratic of events and oldest of jokes that comes to each of us afresh.

At 70 one more clearly than ever before hears footsteps, as they say wide-receivers in the NFL do who are about to be smashed by oncoming pass-defenders while awaiting the arrival of a pass thrown to them in the middle of the field. The footsteps first show up in the obituary pages, which I consult with greater interest than any other section of the newspaper. Not too many days pass when someone I know, or someone whom someone else I know knows, does not show up there. Late last year the anthropologist Clifford Geertz and the novelist William Styron conked out; neither was a close friend, though as fellow members of an editorial board I spent a fair amount of time with them. Then the tennis player Ham Richardson appeared on the obit page. I was a ballboy for an exhibition he and Billy Talbert put on with two members of the Mexican Davis Cup team at the Saddle & Cycle Club in the 1950s in Chicago. I was surprised to learn that Richardson was only three years older than I. I am fairly frequently surprised to discover that the newly deceased are only a little older than I.

Along with footsteps, I also hear clocks. Unlike baseball, life is a game played with a clock. At 70, a relentlessly insistent ticking is going off in the background. I have decided to read, and often reread, books I've missed or those I've loved and want to reread one more time. I recently reread *War and Peace*, my second reading of this greatest of all novels, and I ended it in sadness, not only because I didn't wish to part from Pierre, Natasha, Nicolai, and the others left alive at the novel's end, but because I know it is unlikely I shall return for another rereading.

I've been reading Proust's *Jean Santeuil*, his run-up for *In Search of Lost Time*, which I'd like to have time to read for a third and last time. I wonder if I shall be in the game long enough to reread *Don Quixote* and Herodotus and Montaigne—reread them all deeply and well, as they deserve to be read but, as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AFP / Getty Images / Tiziana Fabi

Sophia Loren at three score and ten

always with masterworks, one suspects one failed to do the first and even second time around.

Seventy ought to concentrate the mind, as Samuel Johnson said about an appointment with the gallows on the morrow, but it doesn't—at least, it hasn't concentrated my mind. My thoughts still wander about, a good part of the time forgetting my age, lost in low-grade fantasies, walking the streets daydreaming pointlessly. (Tolstoy, in *Boyhood*, writes: "I am convinced that should I ever live to a ripe old age and my story keeps pace with my age, I shall daydream just as boyishly and impractically as an old man of 70 as I do now.") Despite my full awareness that time is running out, I quite cheerfully waste whole days as if I shall always have an unending supply on hand. I used to say that the minutes, hours, days, weeks, months seemed to pass at the same rate as ever, and it was only the decades that flew by. But now the days and weeks seem to flash by, too. Where once I would have been greatly disconcerted to learn that the publication of some story or essay of mine has been put off for a month or two, I no longer am: the month or two will now come around in what used to seem like a week or two.

I hope this does not suggest that, as I grow older, I am attaining anything like serenity. Although my ambition has lessened, my passions have diminished, my interests narrowed, my patience is no greater and my perspective has not noticeably widened. Only my general intellectual assurance has increased. Pascal says that under an aristocracy "it is a great advantage to have a man as far on his way at 18 or 20 years as another could be at 50; these are 30 years gained without trouble." To become the intellectual equivalent of an aristocrat in a democracy requires writing 20 or so books—and I have just completed my 19th.

Still, time, as the old newsreels had it, marches on, and the question at 70 is how, with the shot clock running, best to spend it. I am fortunate in that I am under no great financial constraints, and am able to work at what pleases me. I don't have to write to live—only to feel alive. Will my writing outlive me? I am reasonably certain that it won't, but—forgive me, Herr Schopenhauer—I keep alive the illusion that a small band of odd but immensely attractive people not yet born will find something of interest in my scribbles. The illusion, quite harmless I hope, gives me—I won't say the courage, for none is needed—but the energy to persist.

The fear of turning 70 for a writer is that he will fall too far out of step with the society that he is supposed, in essays and stories, to be chronicling. I recently wrote a book on friendship, but was I disqualified, as one or two younger reviewers politely suggested, from knowing how friendship really works among the young today? I continue to read contemporary fiction, but not with the same eagerness with which I once read the fiction written by my elders and people of my own generation. In his sixties, Edmund Wilson, describing himself as "a back-number," announced his loss of interest in much of the writing of the day. A time comes when one loses not merely interest but even curiosity about the next new thing. How intensely, at 70, must I scrutinize the work of Jack Black, Sarah Silverman, Dave Eggers, and Sacha Baron Cohen?

I have never attempted to calculate the collective age of my readers. When I am out flogging a new book, or giving a talk, the audience who come to hear me are generally quite as old as I, and some a bit older. Perhaps the young do not spend much time attending such non-events. Perhaps they feel I haven't much to say to them. I do receive a fair amount of email from younger readers—in their 20s and 30s—but many of these readers have literary aspirations of their own, and write to me seeking advice.

But the feeling of being more and more out of it begins to sink in. The news of the new movie stars, comedians, hotshot bloggers, usually comes to me a little late. My pretensions as a writer of nonfiction have been toward cultural criticism. Older men and women—Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, James Baker—can stay in the foreign policy game almost unto death. But how long can a writer commenting on the culture be expected really to know the culture? In fact, there can even be something a little unseemly about writers beyond a certain age claiming to share the pleasures of the young. I recall

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pauline Kael, who was 18 years older than I, once comparing a movie to "your favorite rock concert," and I thought, oh, poor baby, how embarrassing to see you whoring after youth. I much like the Internet, adore email, and probably use Google seven or eight times a day. But must I also check in on YouTube, have a posting on MySpace, and spend a portion of my day text-messaging? At 70, the temptation is to relax, breathe through the mouth, and become comfortably rear-guard.

By 70, too, one is likely to have lived through a fair amount of cultural change, so that traces of disorientation tend to set in. Chateaubriand (1768-1848), whose dates show that he lived through the *ancien régime*, the French Revolution, Napoleon, the Restoration, the Second Republic, and died just before the Revolution of 1848, wrote: "Nowadays one who lingers on in this world has witnessed not only the death of men, but also the death of ideas: principles, customs, tastes, pleasures, pains, feelings—nothing resembles what he used to know. He is of a different race from the human species in whose midst he is ending his days." In my youth one could go into a drugstore and confidently ask for a package of Luckies and nervously whisper one's request for condoms. Now things are precisely reversed.

I have, of course, lived through nothing so cataclysmic as Chateaubriand. But I was born on the far side of the rock 'n' roll curtain: some of that music (the less druggy Beatles songs) seems to me charming, but none of it for me is charged with real meaning. More important, I was born in a time when there still existed a national culture, so that the entire country grew up singing the same songs, watching the same movies, and, later, television shows. The crafty marketers had not yet divided the country and its culture into Kid Culture, Black Culture, and scores of other Ethnic Cultures. Something like the *Ed Sullivan Show*, which might have a comedian, an animal act, a tenor from the Met, a young popular singer, a foreign dance troupe, a magician—something, in short, for all the family—is no longer possible today.

I also grew up at a time when the goal was to be adult as soon as possible, while today—the late 1960s is the watershed moment here—the goal has become to stay as young as possible for as long as possible. The consequences of this for the culture are enormous. That people live longer only means that they feel they can remain kids longer: uncommitted to marriage, serious work, life itself. Adolescence has been stretched out, at least, into one's 30s, perhaps one's early 40s. At 70, I register with mild but genuine amazement that the movie director Christopher Guest's father played keyboard for the Righteous Brothers or that the essayist Adam Gopnik's parents, then graduate students, took him in their arms to the opening of the Guggenheim Museum. How can anyone possibly have parents playing keyboards or going to graduate school! *Impossible!*

I, of course, hope for an artistically prosperous old age, though the models here are less than numerous. Most composers were finished by their 60s. Not many novelists have turned out powerful books past 70. Matisse, who is a hero of culture, painted up to the end through great illness, though his greatest work was done long before. There are the models of Rembrandt and Yeats. Rembrandt, in his richly complex self-portraits, recorded his own aging with great success, and Yeats—"That is no country for old men"—made aging, if not Byzantium, his country: "An aged man is but a paltry thing, / A tattered coat upon a stick, unless / Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing / For every tatter in its mortal dress."

Rembrandt died at 63, Yeats at 73. I see that I had better get a move on. ♦

Boys Behaving Badly

The evil of banality in middle-class Los Angeles.

BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Winston Churchill once said that the Germans are "either at your feet or at your throat." That's true as well of the motion-picture industry and its treatment of youth. American movies about kids under 21 are either full of flattery or awash in condemnation. The teenagers we see are either wonderful beyond all measure—or they're the most pitilessly terrifying creatures to roam the earth since Tyrannosaurus rex.

Alpha Dog
Directed by Nick Cassavetes

The horrific new melodrama called *Alpha Dog* is a prime example of the teen-as-Tyrannosaurus movie. It's a barely fictionalized account of the kidnapping and murder of a 15-year-old Los Angeles boy whose thuggish older brother got crosswise of a teen drug dealer whose actual given name is Jesse James Hollywood. Three of Hollywood's compatriots are in prison, and a fourth—the one who hit Nick Markowitz with a shovel and then machine-gunned him to death in a shallow grave—is on death row in California. Hollywood is alleged to have paid his death-row buddy a few hundred bucks to kill the boy. Hollywood got wind of all the arrests, disappeared, and five years later was apprehended in a coastal village in Brazil. He is now in jail awaiting trial.

The release of *Alpha Dog* was delayed almost a year because Hollywood's defense lawyer tried to use the

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Universal Pictures / Darren Michaels

Anton Yelchin, Amanda Seyfried

film to his advantage. He claimed that writer-director Nick Cassavetes received improper help from the district attorney pursuing Hollywood and that the movie itself would make it impossible for his client to receive a fair trial. The fact that this fugitive from justice—who was secretly supported during his Brazil sojourn by his father, a onetime Little League coach and accused narcotics manufacturer—would even now have high-priced legal talent doing everything possible to keep him from receiving his just deserts is part of the perversely fascinating story Cassavetes tells in *Alpha Dog*.

Like Hollywood, all the kids in *Alpha Dog* come from families that are, at the very least, stoutly middle class (a few are rich). Yet they exist in a nearly feral state. As the movie's title indicates, the boys are basically pack animals. The plot is set in motion when one of the pack challenges the alpha-male status of the Hollywood character—here called Johnny Truelove.

The challenger is Jake Mazursky (Ben Foster, in a towering performance), who comes to Johnny and asks for more time to repay a debt. Johnny tries to establish his physical dominance by pushing Jake through a glass table, only to discover that his rival is tougher, meaner, and stronger than he. Jake's rage terrifies Johnny, who has to find some way to reestablish his primacy. When he and two of his underlings see Jake's kid brother Zack (Anton Yelchin) walking down the street, Johnny decides on the spur of the moment to kidnap the boy.

Truelove and his friends take Zack Mazursky to Palm Springs (in real life, the destination was Santa Barbara). At this point, Truelove goes back home and leaves Zack in the custody of his friend Frankie (a very fine Justin Timberlake), whose wealthy father lives in the desert. And for three days, Frankie and Zack basically party together. Zack makes no move to escape, even when Frankie offers to buy him a bus ticket home. Zack says he doesn't want to get his brother in trouble, but the truth is he seems thrilled to be playing with the older kids. The depiction of these young wolves at play is a cross between an MTV show about spring break and a Hieronymus Bosch depiction of hell. They seem to think they're having fun, but their world is the last place any sane person would want to be.

Then Johnny calls his lawyer friend to ask what would happen to someone who kidnaps a boy to resolve a debt. Twenty-five to life, the lawyer says. Johnny calls Jake to negotiate, and Jake swears he will hunt Johnny down and kill him like a dog. At which point Johnny decides the best course of action is to have Jake killed and dump his body somewhere in the mountains.

During the movie, Cassavetes keeps a running tally on how many witnesses know something untoward is going on. He ends up at 38, most of them teenagers, many of them aware that Zack is being held captive, sort of. And only one is shown wrestling with her conscience—a girl who seeks her own mother out for counsel, only to be told that her parents are on Ecstasy and don't want to be bothered.

At this point, the uncompromising and punishing *Alpha Dog* starts taking on some of the more clichéd aspects of other teen movies. According to all teen movies, if teenagers behave badly, the fault lies not with them but with their parents. The grown-ups are either weak and uncomprehending (*Rebel Without a Cause*) or they're indifferent ("What did your parents do to you?" "They ignore me."—*The Breakfast Club*) or they're abusive (every film on the Lifetime channel). Cassavetes offers up a quick and dirty explanation for the bad behavior of all the kids on display here: Johnny's dad is a drug dealer, too. Frankie's dad hires hookers and employs him to cure and clean the marijuana grown at the Palm Springs estate. Jake's mother isn't nice to him.

But what we are seeing in *Alpha Dog* isn't reducible in this manner. This isn't a representative story of American youth gone awry; it's not a representative story at all, thank God. Kidnapping, conspiracy, and murder aren't what happens when people neglect or coddle or aren't pleasant to their children. *Alpha Dog* is a spellbinding story not because it is all too familiar but because it's a portrait of an unfamiliar evil at work in a completely familiar setting.

And it turns out that the most unsettling aspect of the case—the 38 witnesses who do not intervene to save the boy—doesn't quite get it right. According to news reports, there were numerous calls to 911 that could have guided the police to Nick Markowitz. But the two L.A. police officers on the case were too lazy to check into the leads.

Cassavetes neglects that aspect of the case, and that is unfortunate. But still, *Alpha Dog* is an extraordinarily impressive piece of filmmaking—a vision of human waste that's at its best when it's nearly unbearable. ♦

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WEEKLY STANDARD GOES TO ALASKA...THIS JUNE!

Join us aboard Holland America's well-appointed ms Oosterdam, leaving from Seattle on June 16 and returning on June 23. Enjoy the breathtaking coast of Alaska— and take in as much political talk as you want!

We'll stop in Juneau, Hubbard Glacier, Sitka, and Ketchikan—and also in Victoria, B.C. And throughout the week we'll offer discussions on big political topics . . . such as the outlook for Iraq, the future of our military, the shape of the 2008 presidential race, the two-year-old Roberts Court, and the challenges ahead for conservatives.

On hand from our staff will be Bill Kristol, Fred Barnes, Claudia Anderson, Terry Eastland, Jonathan Last, and Philip Terzian. Joining us will be special guests Michael J. Gerson, President Bush's chief speechwriter from 2001 to 2005, and Frederick W. Kagan, military historian and resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, and author of *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy.*

We promise an exceptional vacation—the beauty of Alaska and the brains of *The Weekly Standard.* (We couldn't resist that one.) June will arrive sooner than you think, so make your reservations now!

WEEKLY STANDARD 2007 CRUISE

Date	*Day*	*Ports of Call*
June 16	Sat.	Seattle, WA
June 17	Sun.	At Sea
June 18	Mon.	Juneau, AK
June 19	Tues.	Hubbard Glacier
June 20	Wed.	Sitka, AK
June 21	Thurs.	Ketchikan, AK
June 22	Fri.	Victoria, BC
June 23	Sat.	Seattle, WA

For more information, call 1-800-266-4043 or visit www.twscruise.com

THE CRUISE AUTHORITY

Holland America

the weekly Standard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

President Abraham Lincoln
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Mr. President:

We the undersigned coalition of Congressmen and Senators are writing you to protest your decisions to: (1) send more troops into the campaign in Northern Virginia, and (2) appoint a new commander of those forces.

We believe that such a surge of troops would be a strategic mistake. This war is a civil war and therefore unwinnable. Recent events have demonstrated this. Your earlier surges at Bull Run, the Peninsula, and Chancellorsville have all failed. There is every reason to believe that the current effort will fail. Indeed, it is well known that the terrain around the area known as the Wilderness is unsuitable for warfare.

We are also concerned about reports that you have appointed General U.S. Grant as your new commander. General Grant has a controversial reputation—especially his personal habits. We are particularly outraged over reports that General Grant said he intended to fight it out along this line if it takes all summer! You do not have that much time, and Grant's remarks are an admission of failure.

Finally, you do not have the support of the American people. True, you were reelected recently, but General McClellan, running against you on a peace platform, almost defeated you. Had the Southern states been allowed to vote, you would have lost.

We have consulted closely with major military authorities, and they oppose your decision. Generals McDowell, Burnside, and Pope unanimously agree that a surge of troops under Grant will fail. While they say that a year or so ago they could have used more troops, they believe that it is now too little and too late. General Pope said that his campaign suffered from poor intelligence provided by your Pinkerton Service.

We urge you to reconsider, and to adopt the plan we have carefully crafted as follows:

(1) Withdraw General Sherman's army of arsonists from Georgia and the Carolinas.
(2) Withdraw General Sheridan's marauding troops from the Shenandoah.
(3) Pull General Grant and his huge army back to the defense of Washington.

All of this could begin now and finish in four months.

Finally, you should open negotiations with Britain, France, and Canada. True, they are supporting the southern states, but they could use their influence to stop buying cotton, restrict the French troops in Mexico, and wipe out the hotbed of sedition in Canada.

If you do all of the foregoing, we believe you could negotiate an acceptable outcome with Mr. Jefferson Davis.

Signed Most Sincerely,

[Etc., etc.]

This is the text of the letter that was recently discovered in the Lincoln papers. The following note was attached in Lincoln's hand but apparently not sent:

"I agree that if I were to follow your plan, Jeff Davis might be willing to negotiate an outcome acceptable to him. If so, I would appeal to General Lee to allow me to return to Illinois before my trial. -A.L."

the weekly Standard
January 29, 2007

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED